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A Hammock Coast Holiday Getaway (see page 116)

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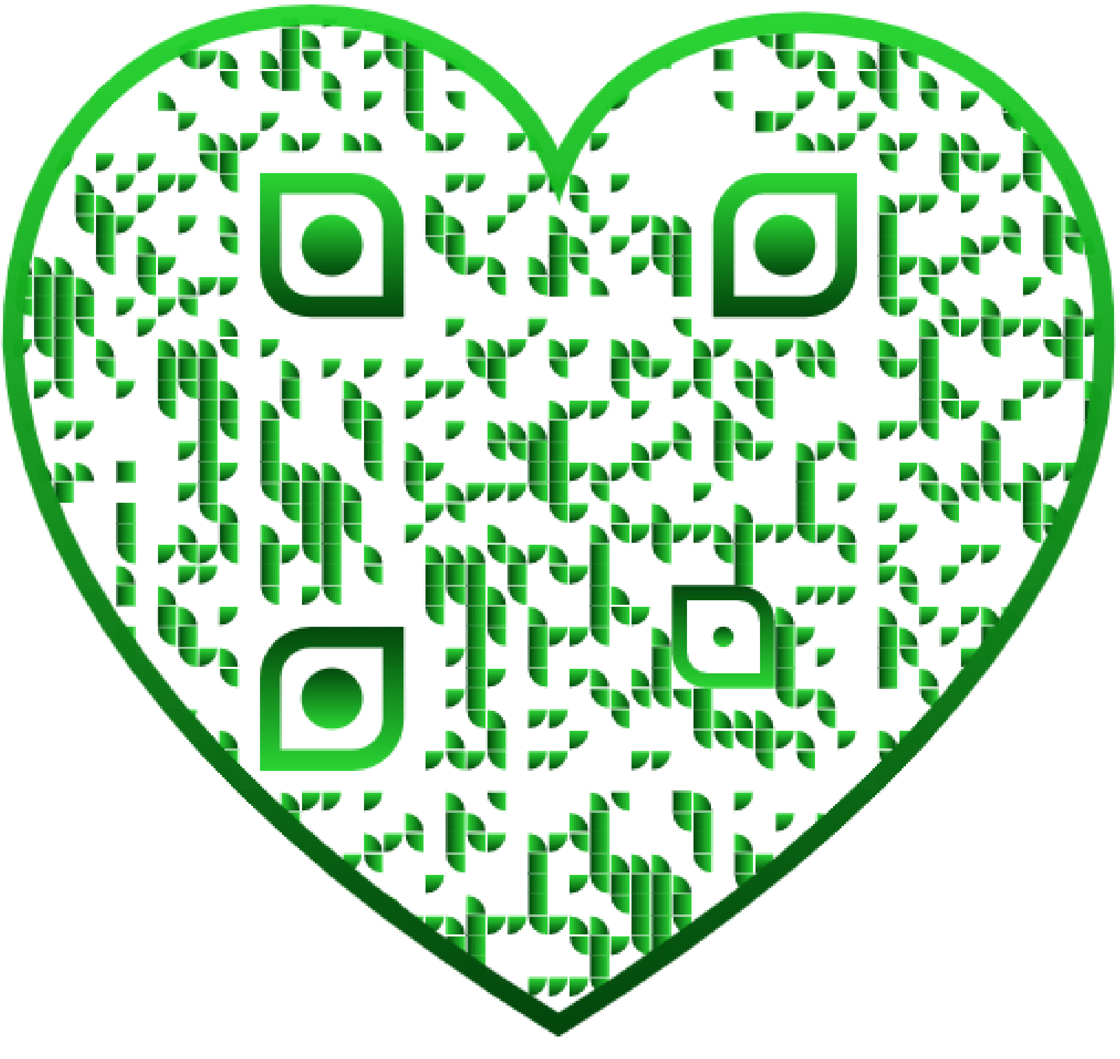
John and Will Hardee's dazzling holiday decor

"I love our drive through the holiday lights at James Island County Park each year, but the display at Brookgreen is something entirely different. It's like living inside *A Charlie Brown Christmas.*" *(See page 116)*



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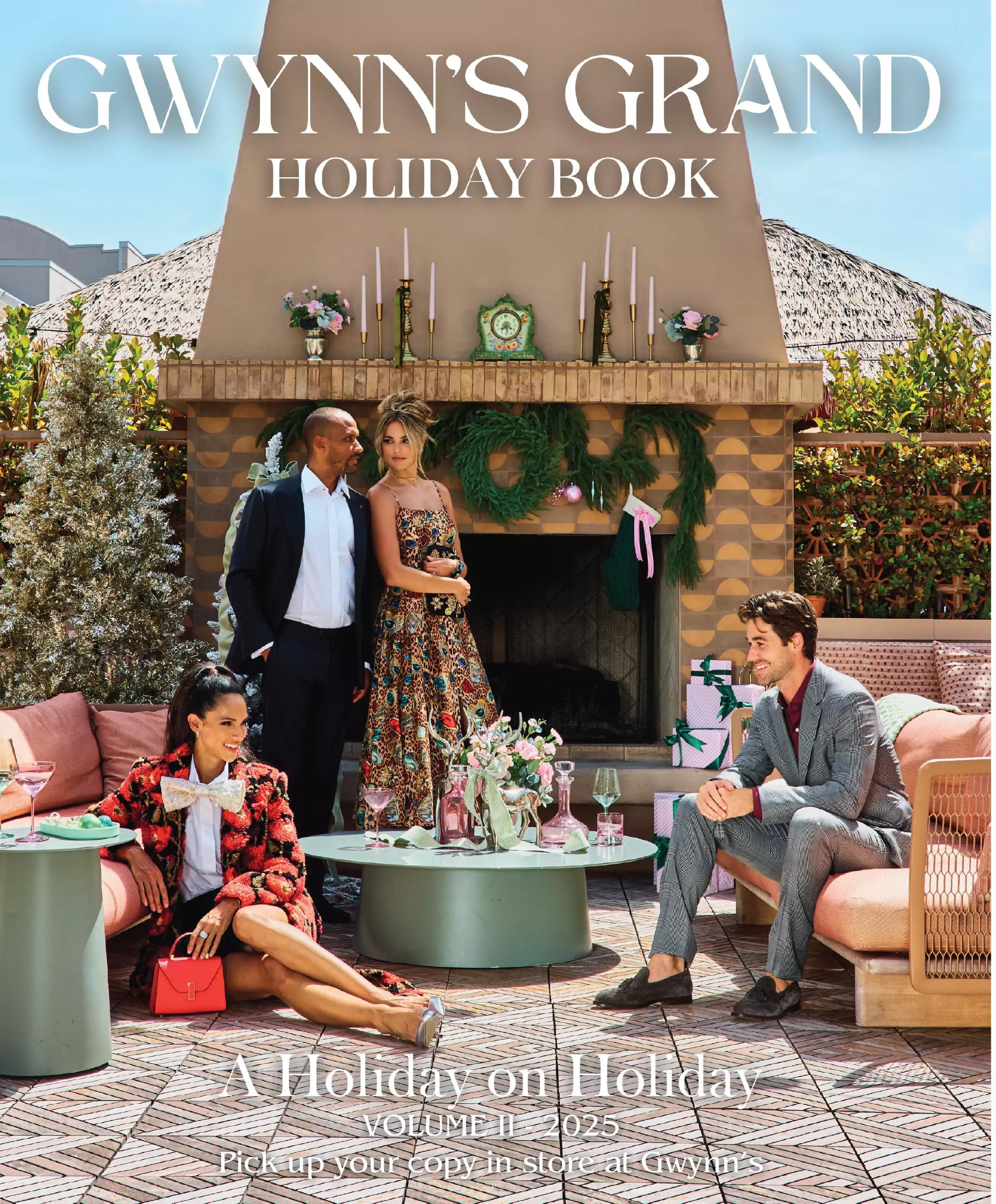

A Holiday on Holiday

VOLUME II - 2025

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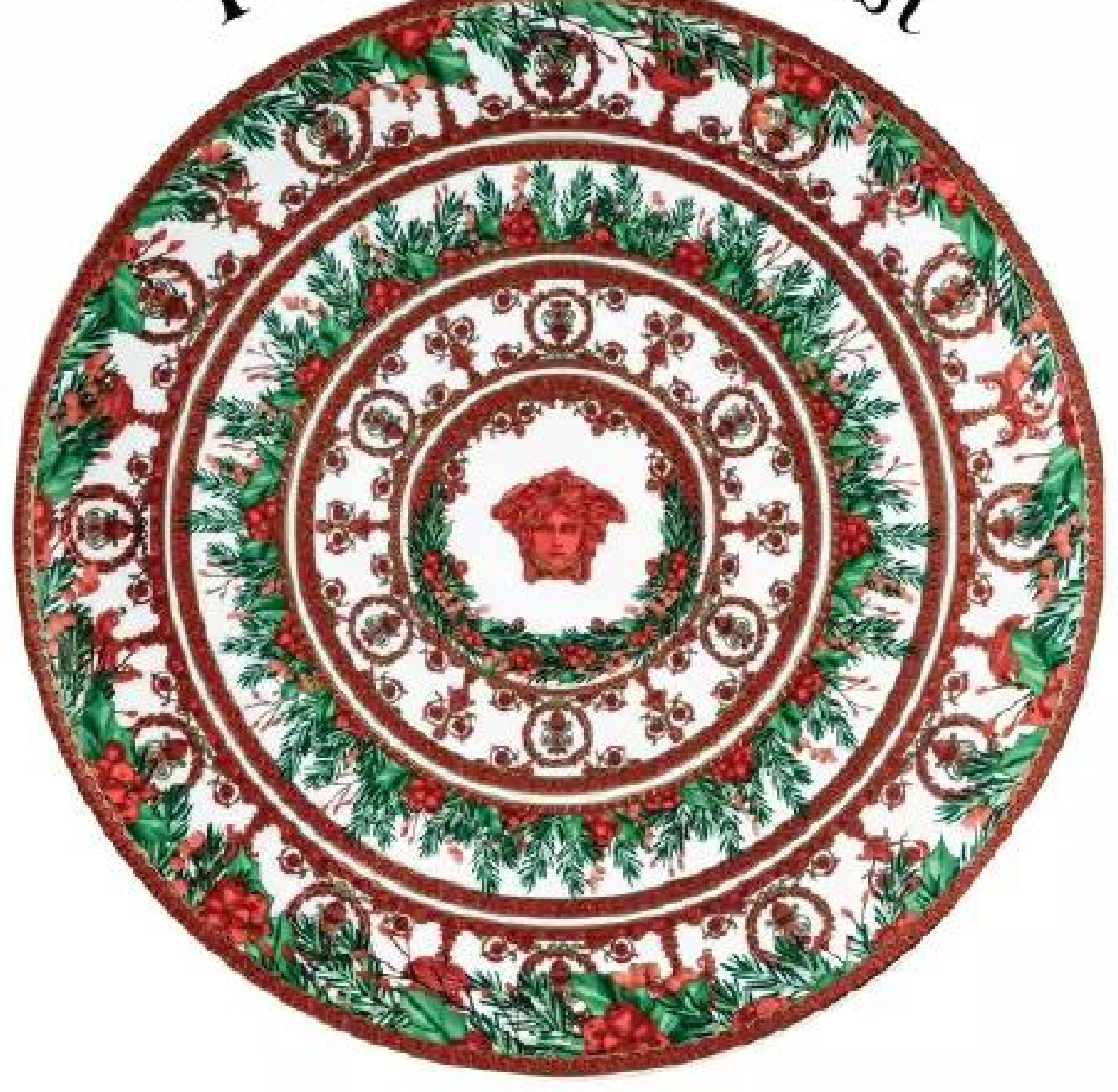

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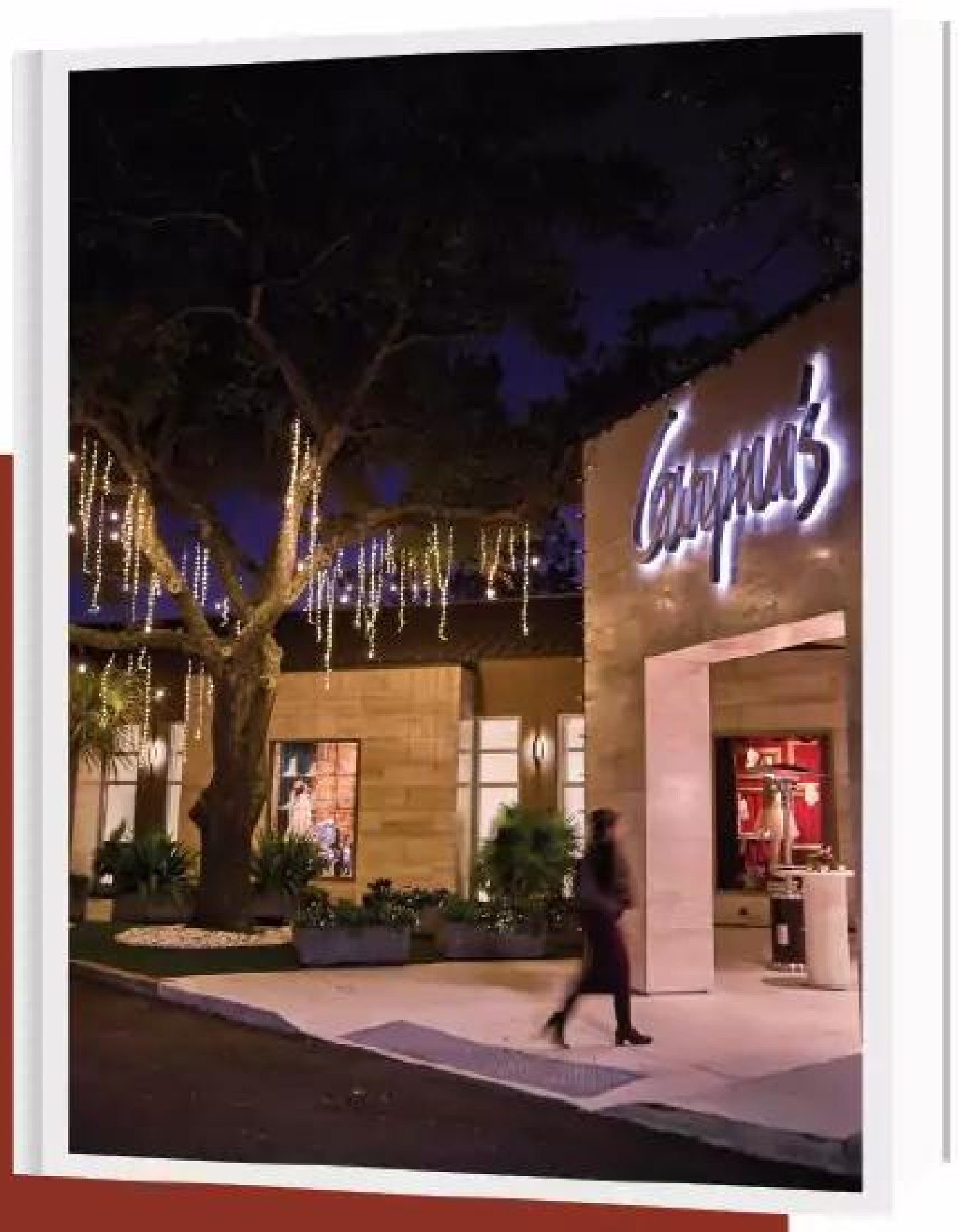

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Graziela Gems Trunk Show December 5th & 6th

Trish McEvoy Holiday Event December 5th & 6th

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Christmas Carolers December 6th, 13th, & 20th from 12:30-3pm

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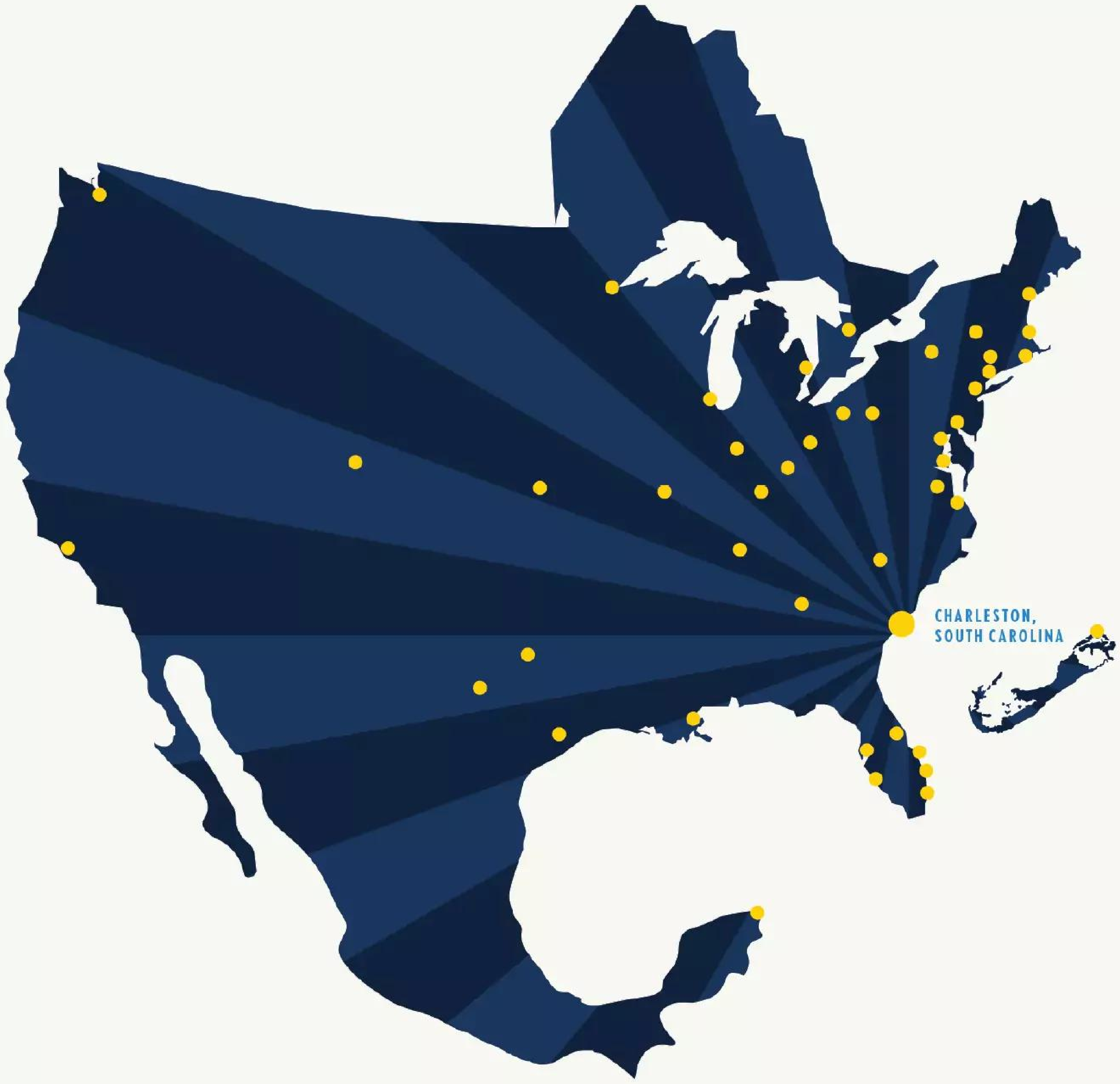

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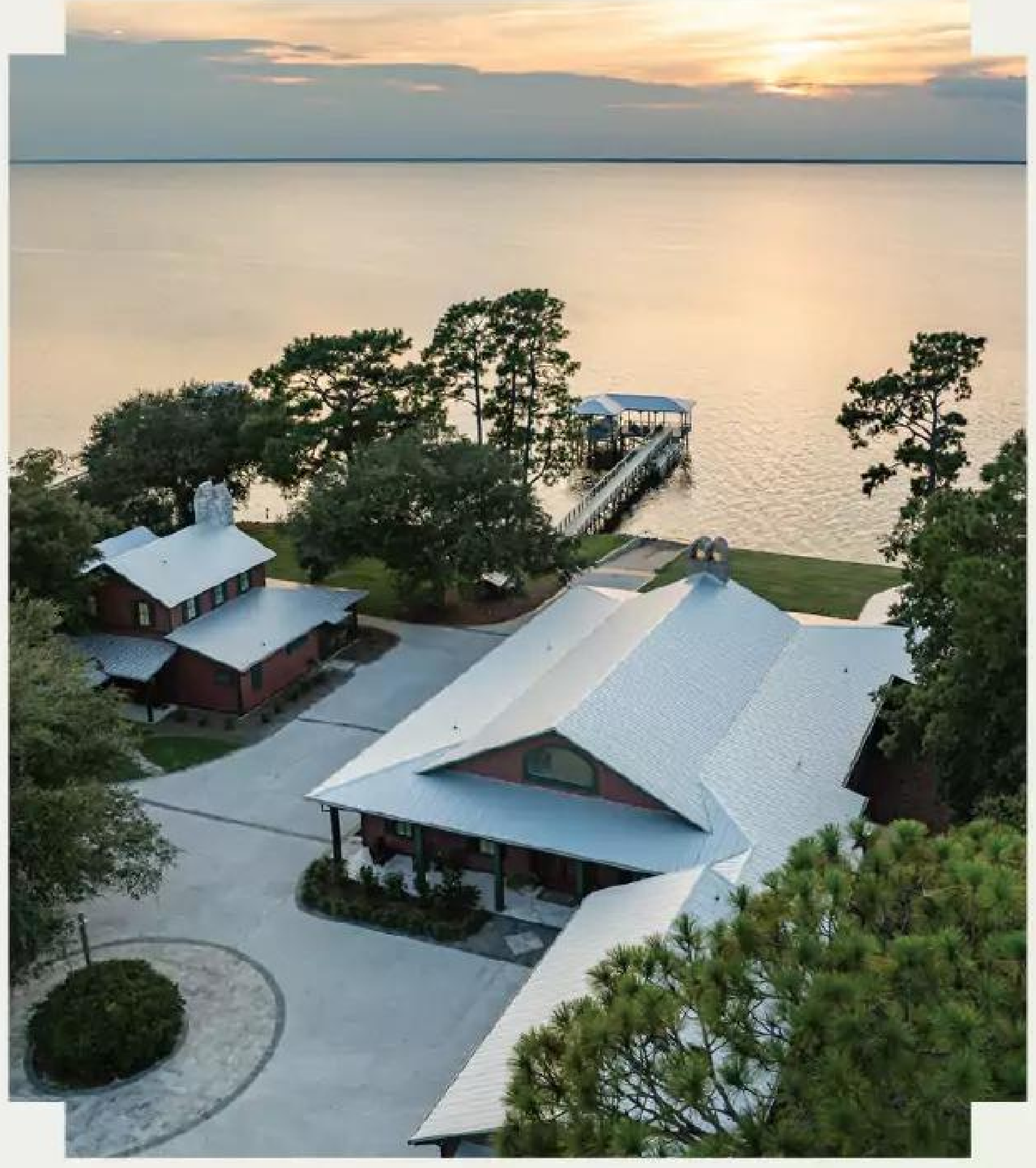

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Designed to Dazzle

by Emily Storrow When it comes to Christmas decor, more is more! Step inside John and Will Hardee's Queen Street home that's filled with glittering finery—inside and out

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by Marion Sullivan 'Tis the season to entertain, and these punch and small bite combos will have you party-ready for every merry and bright gathering

116 /// A HAMMOCK COAST HOLIDAY

by Stratton Lawrence Turn a visit to Brookgreen Gardens' Nights of a Thousand Candles into a festive, family-friendly adventure

Cover: John and Will Hardee's Queen Street house; photograph by Julia Lynn

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (CHRISTMAS DECOR) JULIA LYNN, (DRINKS & DEVILED EGGS) ANDREW CEBULKA, & (LIGHT DISPLAY) HUNTER MCRAE LAWRENCE

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY (FIGURES) ALEX THORNTON PHOTOGRAPHY & (JACQUIE BERGER) JB MCCABE & COURTESY OF (PERFORMANCE) CHARLESTON CHRISTMAS SPECIAL & (NECKWARMERS) J MCLAUGHLIN

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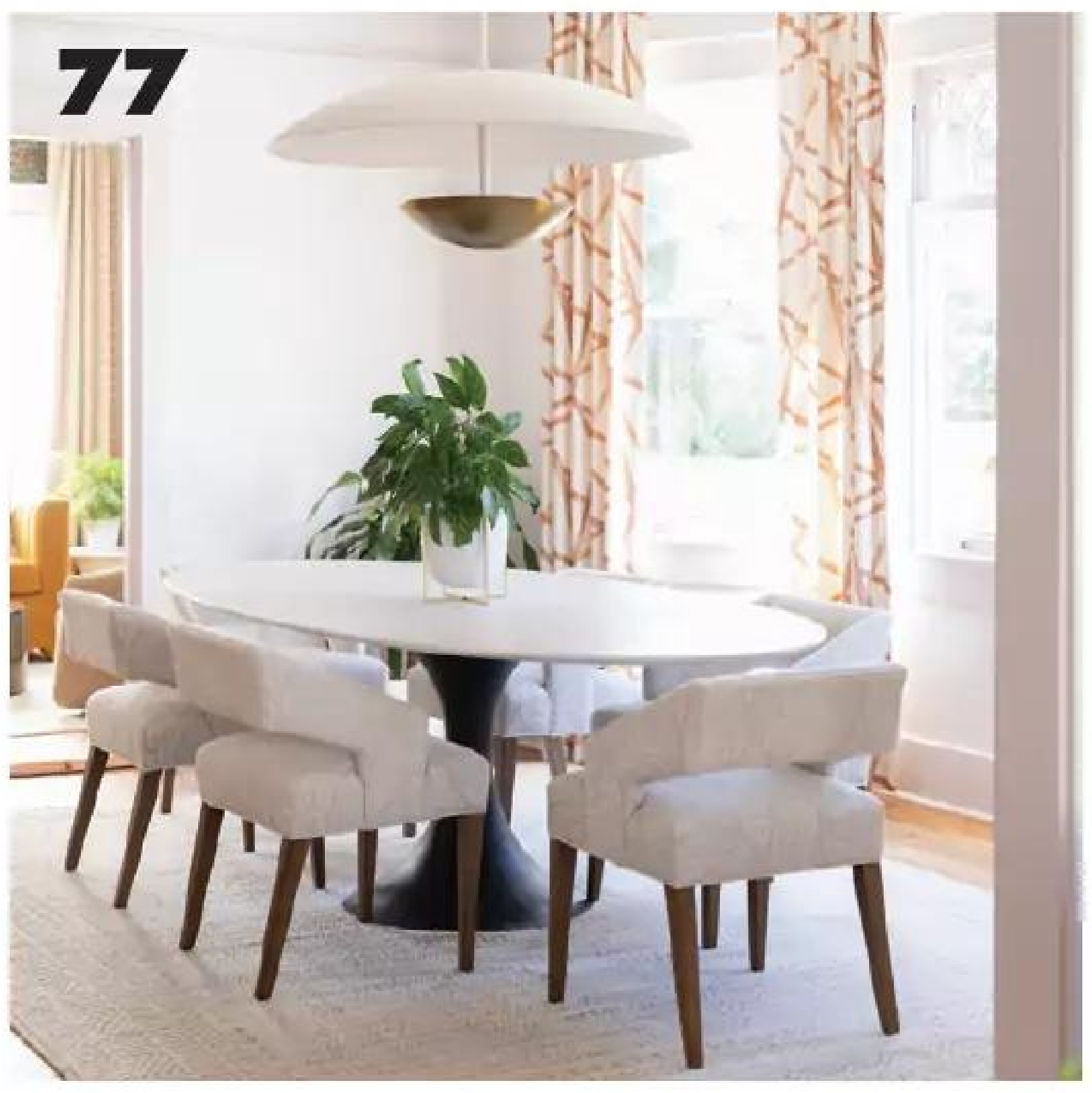

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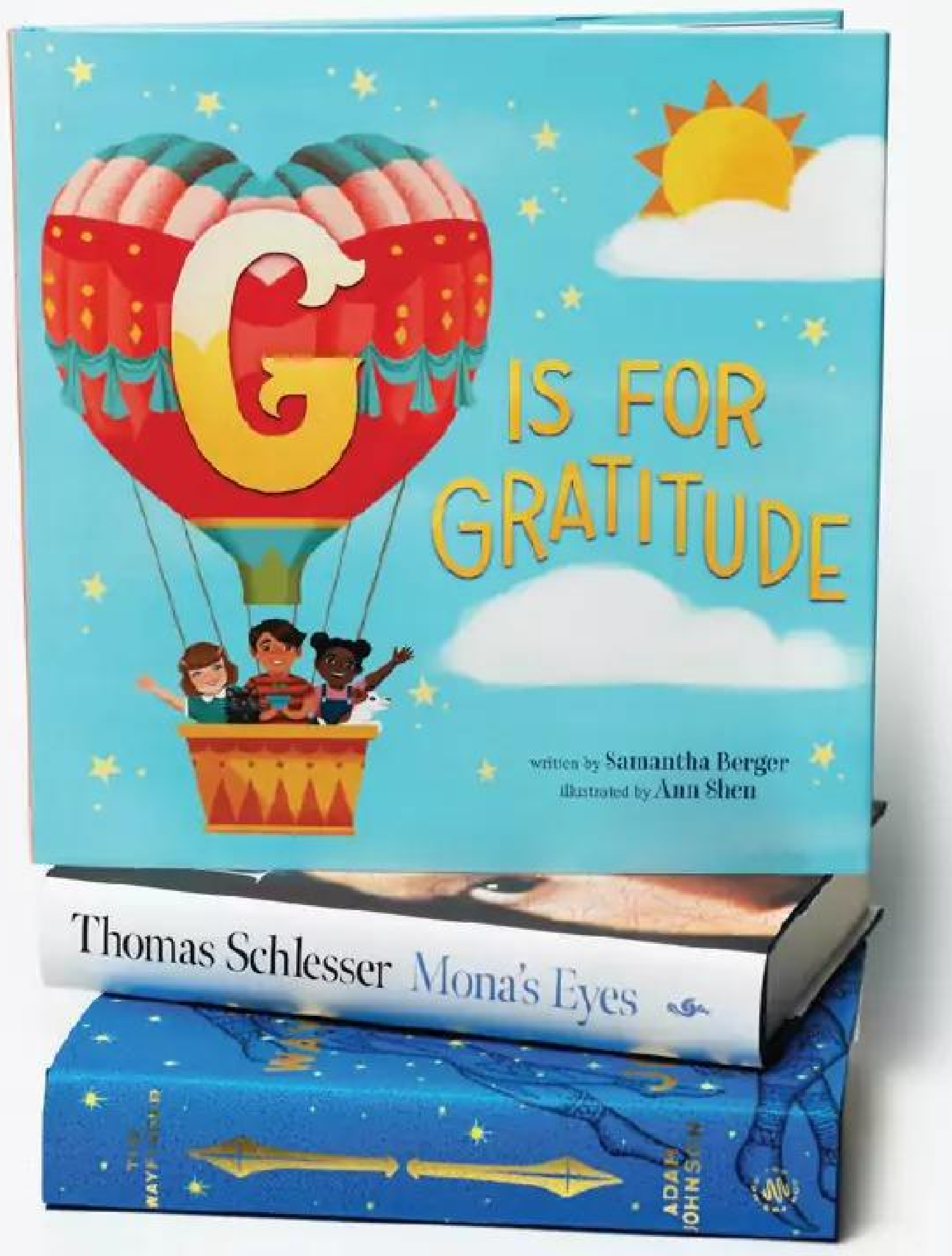
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written by Samantha Berger
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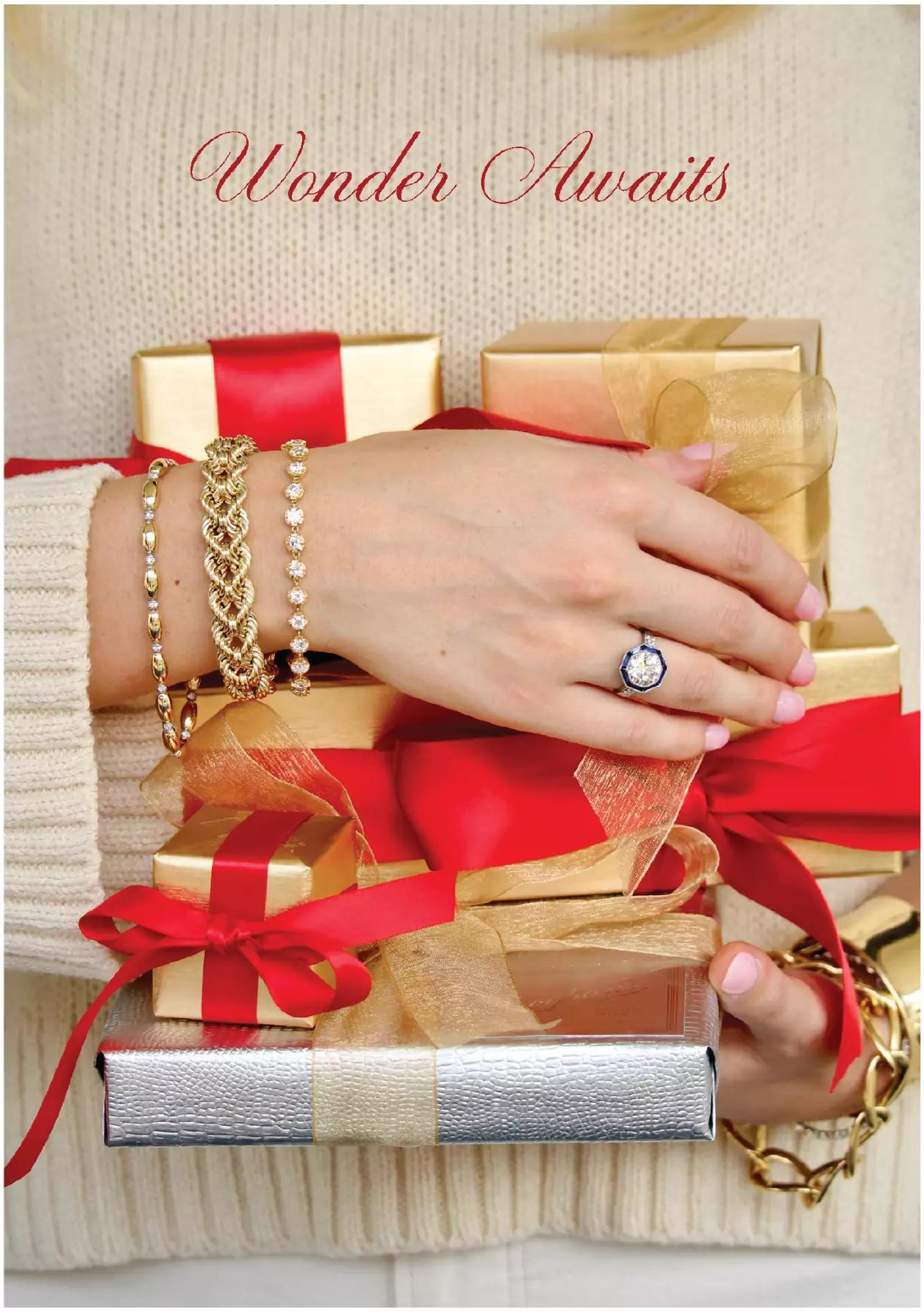

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"I've taken classes with Jordan Maria at ACE, and her positive energy is absolutely contagious. I can't wait to see where her talent takes her." (Arts Profile, page 54)

"I love the work that Lowcountry Local First does in fostering community and encouraging folks to spend their dollars here." (Giving Back, page 58)

"Looking forward to stories from Pawleys ("A Hammock Coast Holiday," page 116) to Charleston, and wishing peace and joy for all."

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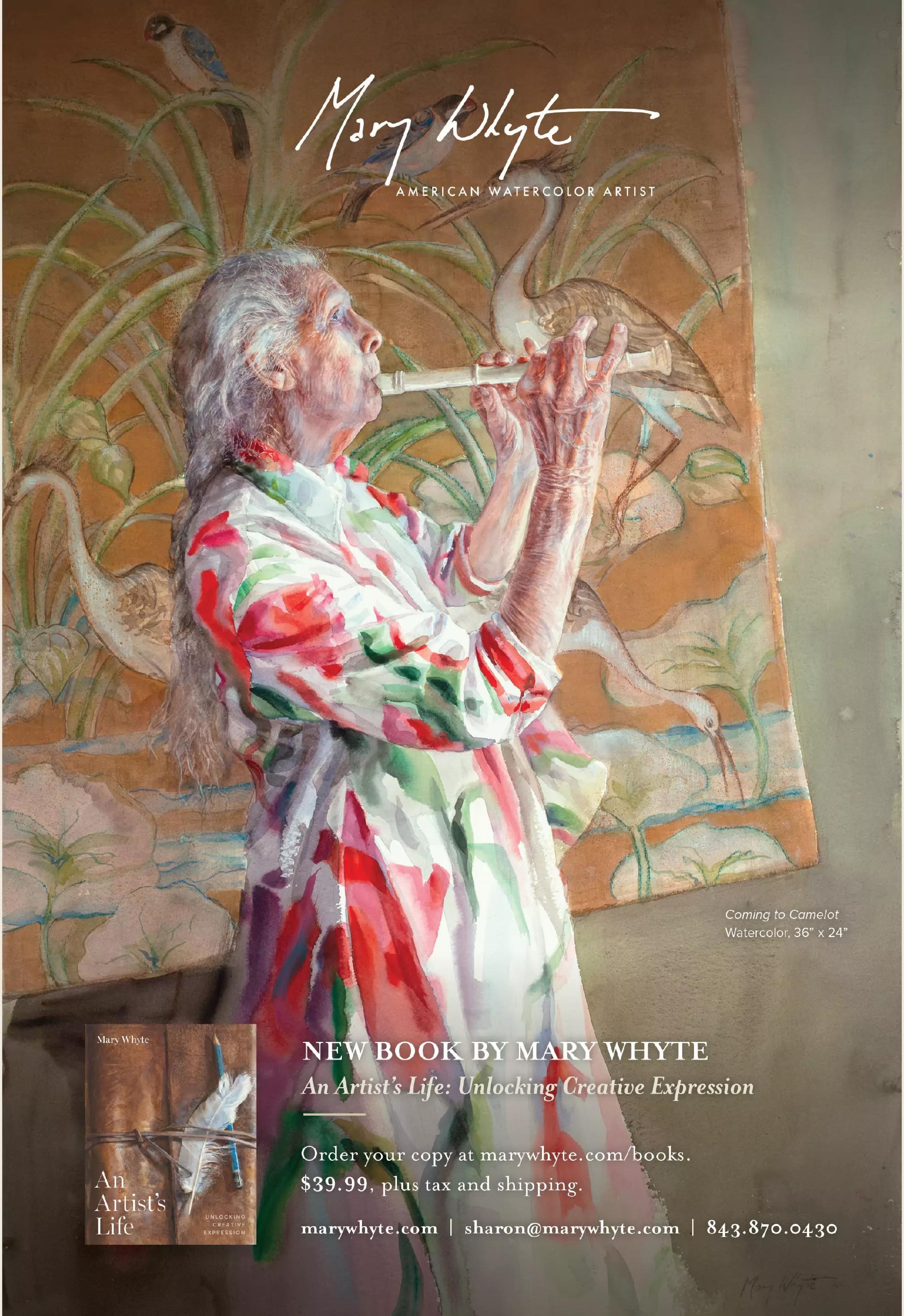
"I'm excited to see the story on the Christkindlmarkt—it's a magical must-experience for the holidays!" (Biz, page 56)

"The holidays are all about the food! I can't wait to check out the recipes for cocktails and small bites to share with family and friends." ("Holiday Cheer," page 104)



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Feeling Merry

Last month, I reminded you all of how our creative staff spends a good bit of time living in the future: holiday shopping in the summer for November's gift guide and listening to vintage carols in the fall as we roll into producing this annual Holiday issue. As you can imagine, by the time December arrives, we've already moved months ahead, into the New Year, and could use a little help getting back into the spirit of it all. Note to self: reread this edition; it's chock-full of the merry and bright accoutrements of the season.

First up, the decorations. For the ultimate in glimmering inspiration, read our cover story, "Designed to Dazzle" (page 92), on John and Will Hardee's Queen Street manse. You may remember this gorgeous house from the cover of our April 2024 Home & Garden issue. ***When I first scouted it in December 2023, it was similarly decked, inside and out, with garland, wreaths, bows, lights, and, count'em, eight trees! It was so layered and striking, I made them promise we could shoot it the following year.*** I'm grateful to them for letting us capture its brilliance and to John for sharing his resources and expert design tips.

For brilliant light displays, it's hard to beat Brookgreen Gardens' Nights of a Thousand Candles, located about 80 miles up the coast in Murrells Inlet. While the experience is certainly worth the drive, with the new hotel and restaurants in nearby Georgetown, we decided to send a creative team—writer Stratton Lawrence, his photographer wife, Hunter McRae, and their two kids—to turn it into a weekend adventure. Check out their festive, family-friendly getaway in "A Hammock Coast Holiday" (page 116), and get planning for next year.

For me, the holidays start with food, specifically tamales—a Christmas morning legacy from my West Coast childhood. While I'm sure you have your own must-have dishes, it never hurts to expand your repertoire, especially when friends, family, and neighbors will be dropping by. That's why we brought back the "Holiday Cheer" feature from our recipe archives. Turn to page 104, where you'll find a variety of punch and small bite recipes from local food-and-beverage pros. From a special mint tea and latkes for Hanukkah to a twist on Hoppin' John and collards for New Year's Day, they will have you party-ready for all manner of celebrations.

And while I don't know if I can achieve (or will even attempt) the Hardees' level of splendor in my house, I will break out my mom's vintage snowball punch bowl, mix up some Meyer lemon margaritas, and set out a tamale buffet that will have my family feeling merry and loved.

The magazine staff and I wish you a joyous holiday season. Enjoy!

Darcy Shankland

dshankland@charlestonmag.com

1975-2025
50
years

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNE RHETT

Celebrating 50
The City Magazine Since 1975
A Hammock Coast Holiday Getaway (see page 116)
charleston
Deck the Halls, Y'all!
Experience the best of Yuletide in the Lowcountry
Plus! Sip, Snack, & Be Merry: 5 punch and appetizer combos for every festivity, Awendaw's German Christkindlmarkt, & the buzz on Edisto Island Honey

PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIA LYNN

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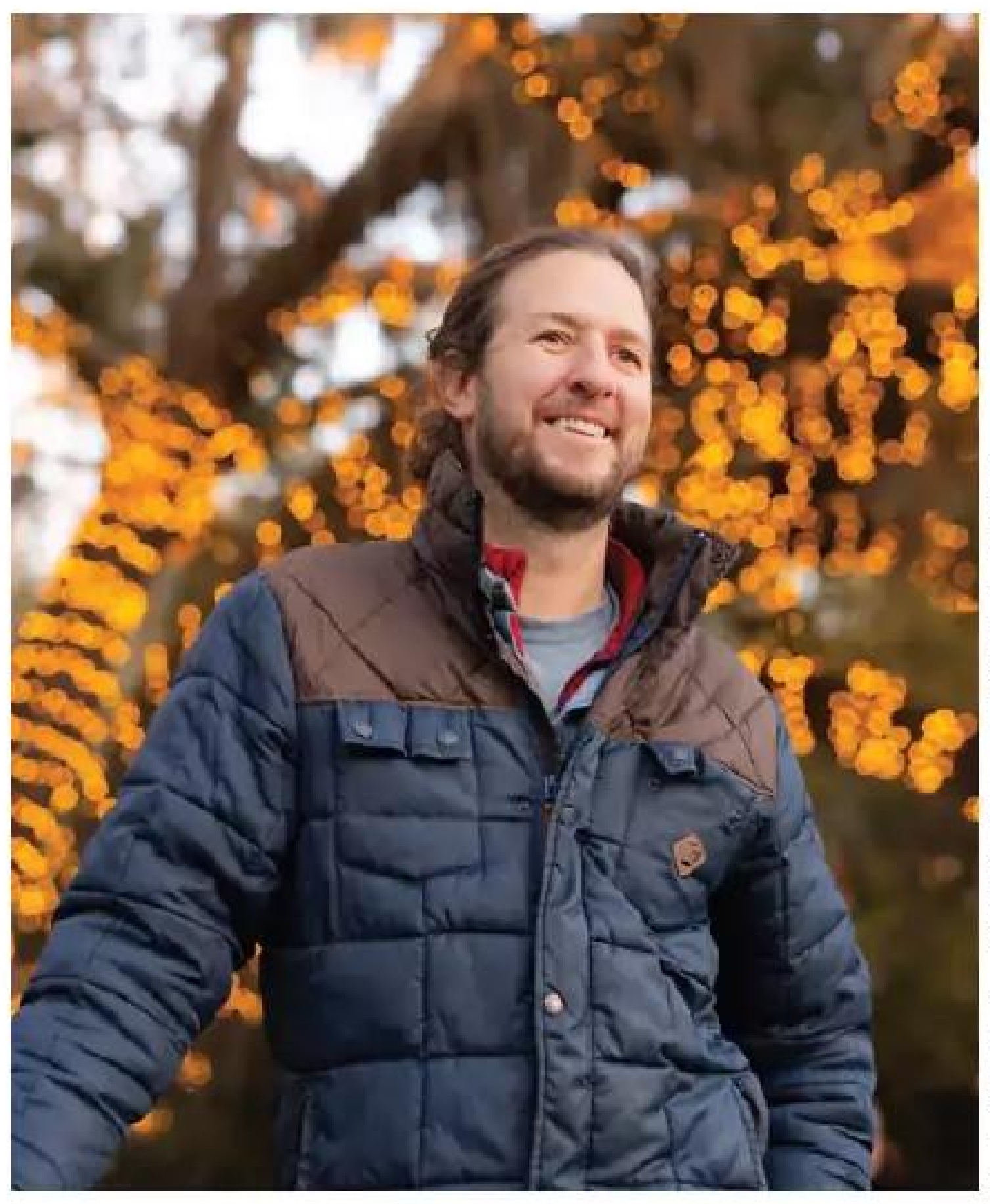


HUNTER MCRAE LAWRENCE

STRATTON LAWRENCE

"An evening at Brookgreen Gardens' Nights of a Thousand Candles is worth the effort! You immediately slow down and feel the Christmas magic."

WRITER: "A Hammock Coast Holiday" (page 116)

FAVORITE LOCAL PRODUCT TO GIFT: "High Wire's Hat Trick Botanical Gin"

BEST WAY TO CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S EVE: "A backyard bonfire on Folly Beach and a midnight toast in the sand"

SEE MORE WORK: StrattonLawrence.com

HUNTER MCRAE LAWRENCE

"A lot of folks make a quick trip to see Nights of a Thousand Candles, but there is a world of opportunity for fun and exploration around the area. You can easily make a weekend out of the experience and leave wanting more."

PHOTOGRAPHER: "A Hammock Coast Holiday" (page 116)

FAVORITE LOCAL PRODUCT TO GIFT: "Candy boxes from OMG Candy Store on King Street"

SEE MORE WORK: HunterMcRae.com

LINDSEY LEIGH

ANDREW CEBULKA

EMILY STORROW

"With the right decorative elements woven in, faux greenery can be fabulous—and will ensure your decor can be used year in and year out."

WRITER: "Designed to Dazzle" (page 92)

FAVORITE LOCAL PRODUCT TO GIFT: "Red Clay Southern Chili Crisp—it makes the perfect stocking stuffer!"

BEST WAY TO CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S EVE: "Every year, my friends visit, and we cook up a storm together. This time, it will be a steak-house dinner starring Tarvin shrimp cocktail, steaks from Ted's Butcherblock, and High Wire gin martinis."

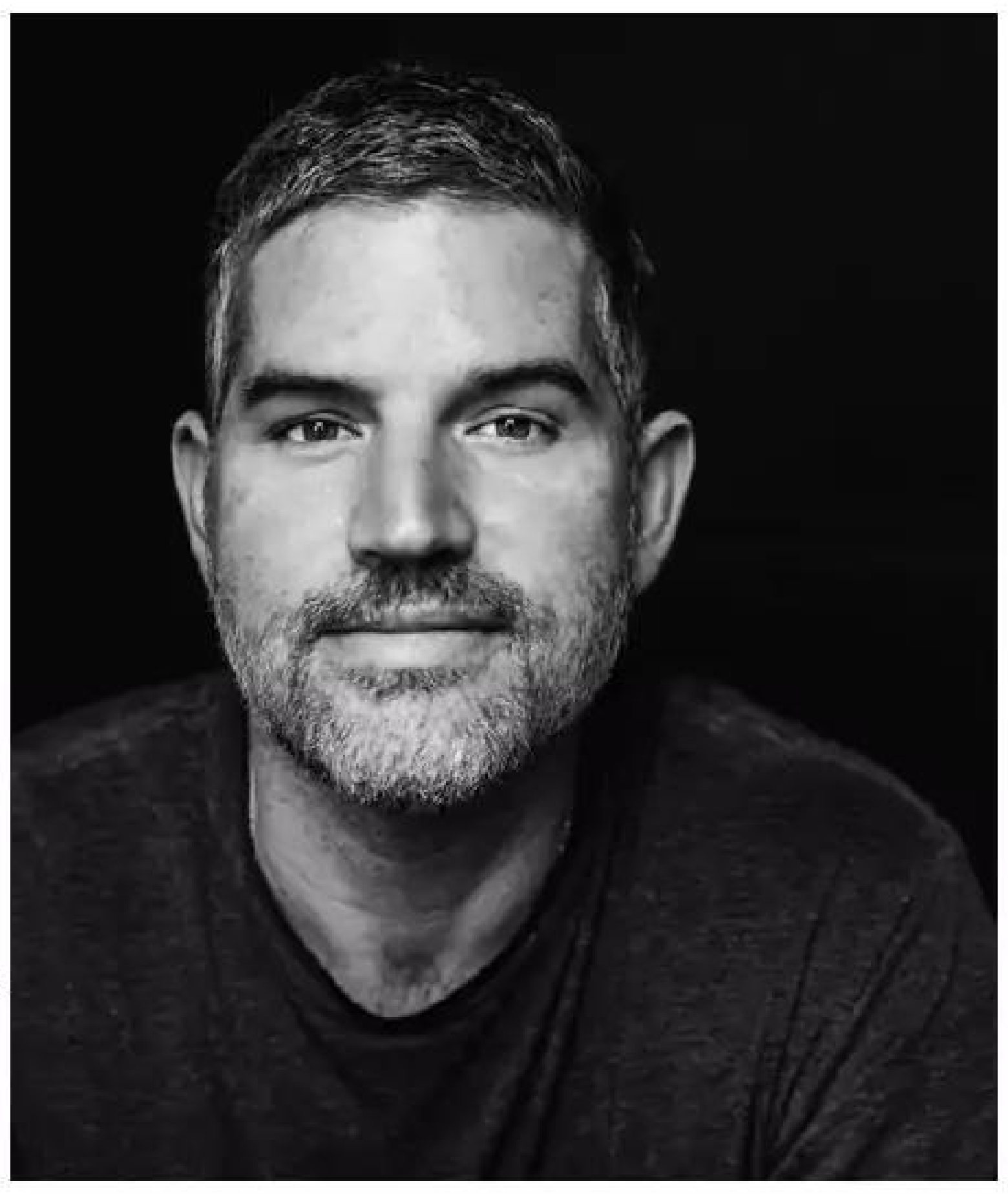
ANDREW CEBULKA

"The sound of a hive tells you everything about the bees' emotional state. When the hum is steady and balanced, all is well; when it sharpens and turns erratic, it's time to back away. Shout-out to protective gear!"

PHOTOGRAPHER: 15 Minutes With Mark Connelly (page 136) & "Holiday Cheer" (page 104)

FAVORITE LOCAL PRODUCT TO GIFT: "Local honey—it captures a snapshot of the Lowcountry and is so darn good."

SEE MORE WORK: AndrewCebulka.com



ANDREW CEBULKA

2025
Holiday
GIFT GUIDE

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No. 09
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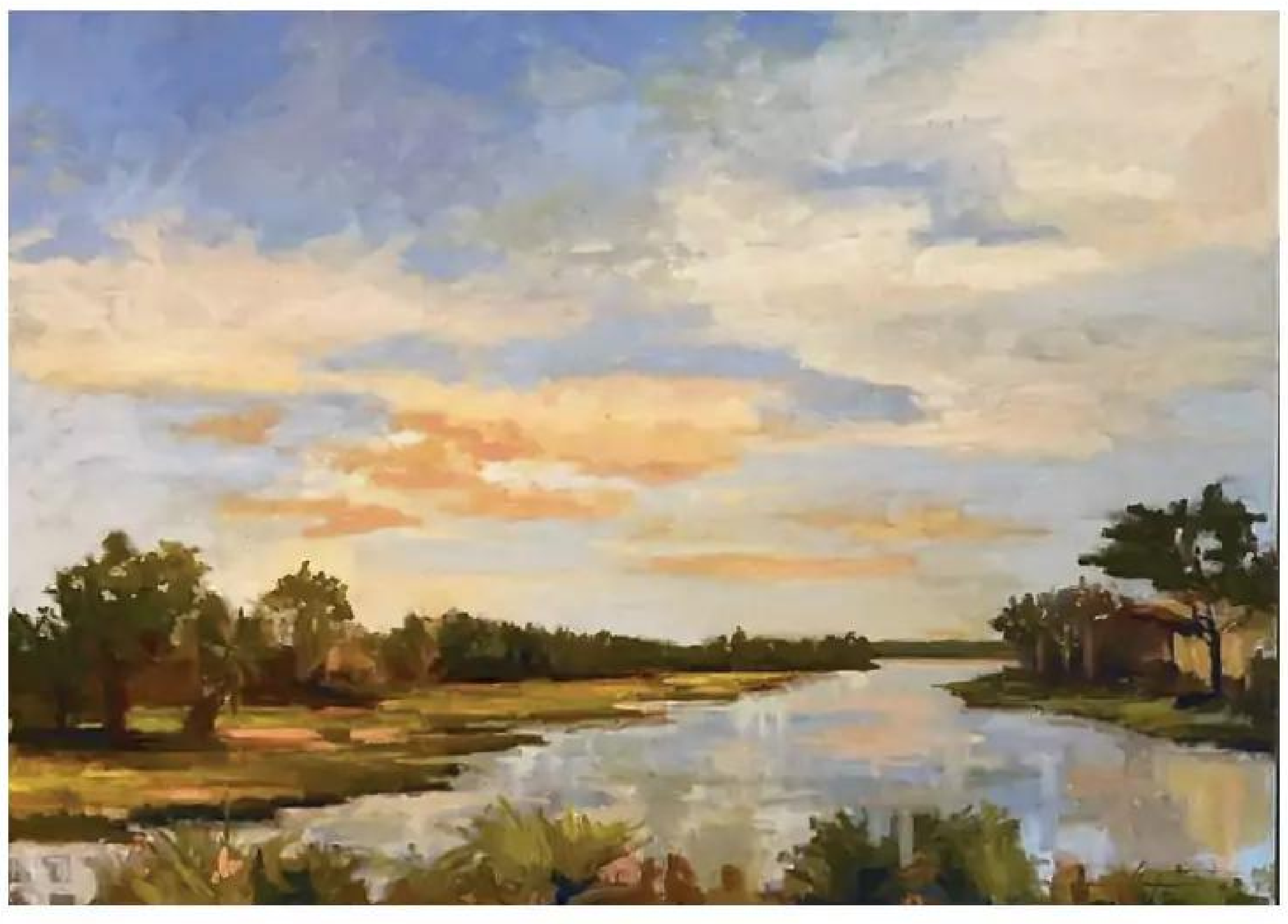

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{ Lowcountry Legends }

Our October "Charleston's 50 Most Influential" feature introduced readers to people and groups whose vision, passion, focus, and faith have shaped the city we love since 1975. They have our gratitude!

You replied:

>> "Charleston has been blessed with so many!" –@tmb.living

>> "So many local luminaries on this list, many of which we've had the pleasure of working with!" –@eveningpostbooks

>> "Cheers to these most generous, dedicated, and passionate lovers of our Holy City. We all are in debt to each of you." –@barbararivershuey

>> "Thank you so much for including me, along with Darrin and my dear Richard. It is a testament to the value of the Coastal Community Foundation to the Lowcountry. I'm so proud of my 'third' child and of all it has become." –Ruth Heffron via e-mail

GOLDEN TOUCH

In August, we spoke with Gold Creations founder Vicki Wolfe and her son, Patrick, to learn more about the family business's recent 50th anniversary and what inspires their jewelry designs.

You said:

>> "I absolutely adore my precious Market Gate necklace from Gold Creations. Next to my wedding ring, it's my most favorite and meaningful piece of jewelry!" **—@oneblessednest**

>> "I just bought a South Carolina charm while on vacation there in July!" **—@billiemerritt18**

>> "This is such an inspiration!" **—@deeruel**

>> "Vicki is one amazing lady." **—@themilkywaychaser**

LETTER TO OUR WRITER

To James Hutchisson:

"What a thoroughly interesting narrative on your historical golf article in the *Charleston* magazine October 2025 issue. Well done! I have been playing since the late 1950s and was lucky to have competed in the Al Esposito Junior Tournament into the late 1960s, all played at Charleston Country Club. I remember playing with some of the younger Ford family. I'm delighted to gain more insight on our golf game's path here in South Carolina, thanks to you. Best wishes." **—Wes Tyler**

From F. C. Ford.
July 1925.

Scan to read the stories at charlestonmag.com.

[METAL MAGIC]

As part of our "Charleston Makers" campaign, we highlighted sculptural blacksmith Sean Berube, whose oceanic creations celebrate animals and the environments they live in.

You commented:

>> "Love the hammerhead!" **—@doylecarves**

>> "Wow! Pretty cool!" **—@vintageporchswings**

>> "Congratulations on the feature!" **—@joywatson459**

>> "That is awesome!" **—@mojofinearts**

Share Your Two Cents

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY (RANKY TANKY) PETER FRANK EDWARDS, (THOMASENA STOKES-MARSHALL) GATELY WILLIAMS, (PATRICK WOLFE) SCOTT HENDERSON PHOTOGRAPHY, & (SEAN BERUBE & SCULPTURE) STAN FOXWORTHY & COURTESY OF (CHRIS CROLLEY) COASTAL EXPEDITIONS, (GLENN & VICKI WOLFE) GOLD CREATIONS, & (GOLFER) THE FORD FAMILY

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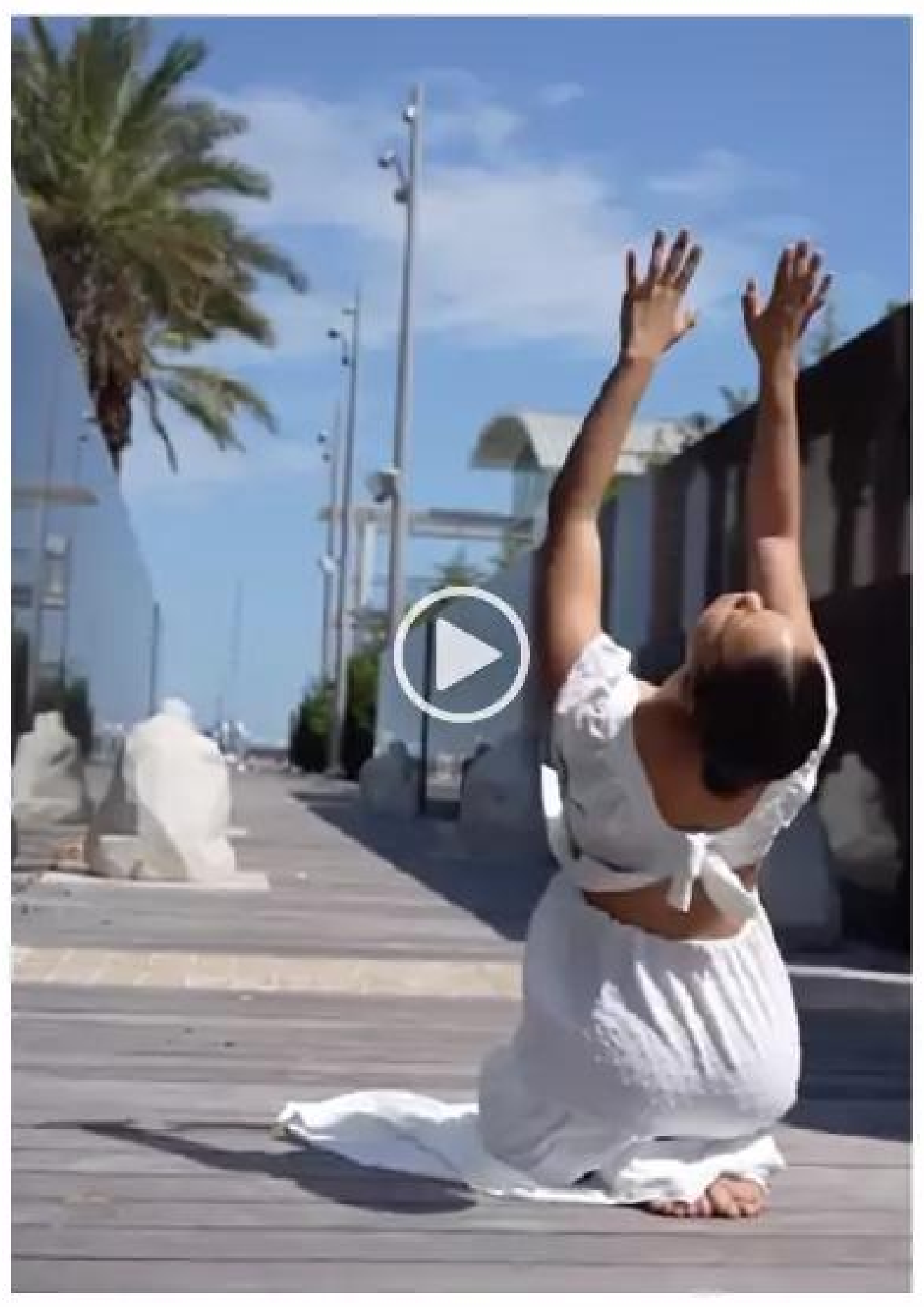
Find exclusive content online this month

Dazzling Holiday Decor Tour the decked out Queen Street house on our cover (page 92), then get homeowner and designer John Hardee's list of resources and additional tips, plus a link to our April 2024 feature on the gorgeous manse.

IN MOTION

Learn about what moves dancer and choreographer Jordan Maria (Arts Profile, page 54). Then, go to charlestonmag.com to watch a video of her dancing at the International African American Museum.



IN THE SPIRIT

Read about how the Caldwell family has grown its German-inspired Christkindlmarkt (page 56). Then, watch a video of Marianne inviting guests to the market.

SEASON'S EATINGS

Get ready to entertain this season with our feature "Holiday Cheer" (page 104), five drink and appetizer combos from local food-and-beverage pros, including Callie's Hot Little Biscuit's Cinnamon Stickies (left). Then, find a trove more recipes, from specialty cocktails to meaty mains to desserts to delight everyone at the table.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY (DINING ROOM) JULIA LYNN & (CINNAMON BISCUITS) ANDREW CEBULKA & COURTESY OF (JORDAN) INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM & (MARKET) CHRISTKINDLMARKT CHARLESTON

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ABOUT TOUNDS // CHARLESTON'S OWN CHRISTKINDLMARKT // BE A LOCALIST

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Bold Moves

/// **FROM IMPROVISED SOLO PERFORMANCES** to collaborative works celebrating Black joy, dancer and choreographer Jordan Maria brings positive energy to the stage with her purposeful movement. Learn more about how she's developed as an artist and what projects she's working on now in our Arts Profile. **See page 54**

PHOTOGRAPH BY RUTA SMITH

(Our Picks)

The best happenings around town this month

THROUGH DECEMBER 24

Holiday Season at American Gardens

Beemok Hospitality rolls out the holiday cheer at its recently opened American Gardens on Meeting Street through Christmas Eve. From 5 to 8 p.m. during the week and 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, hear live music and shop at an outdoor market with artisanal foods and handcrafted gifts. While there, let the kiddos take a ride on the free, holiday carousel. On Saturdays through December 20, children can craft their own snow globes at 11 a.m., followed by an ornament-making workshop at 1 p.m. for $10 each. Hang around for Santa and Mrs. Claus's entrance around 2:30 p.m. on Saturdays as Jolly Ol' St. Nick ditches his sleigh to cruise through downtown in a vintage car before stopping at the park from 3 to 5 p.m. to greet families, check wish lists, and have photos taken for keepsakes. The Charleston Place also will host its iconic holiday train, Santa visits, hot chocolate, and pop-up performances. ***American Gardens, 141 Meeting St. Days & times vary. $10 for the children's workshops. americangardenschs.com***

DECEMBER 6

Gospel Christmas

You are sure to get into the spirit as Charleston Gospel Choir delivers its annual holiday concert, featuring gospel songs, spirituals, and holiday arrangements. The concert, led by guest conductor Donald Lee III, will feature soloist Johnnie Felder, the South Carolina State University Choir, and regional musicians in the Gospel Christmas orchestra. Listen for moving performances of "Joy to the World," "Go Tell it on the Mountain," and "Christmas is Jesus Christ" by composer Trevor Weston, arranged in honor of the choir's 1999 debut. ***Ashley River Baptist Church, 1101 Savannah Hwy. Saturday, 7 p.m. $35-$15. (843) 766-5521, charlestongospelchoir.org***

DECEMBER 13

Reindeer Run

This jolly annual 5K run and walk has a new starting and finishing line near American Gardens. Don merry and bright attire or dress in festive costumes for this family- and pet-friendly run, where you can burn extra holiday calories, while giving back to the MUSC Children's Hospital. More than 3,000 runners are expected to travel the route down Meeting Street to White Point Garden and along the Battery. Stick around for the post-race celebration where prizes will be presented for best costumes, as well as fastest finishers. ***Anerican Gardens, 141 Meeting St. Saturday, 7-10 a.m. $35-$10. reindeerrun.org***

DECEMBER 21

Marshgrass Mamas

The Marshgrass Mamas perform their blend of bluegrass and roots music in the glittering Spiegeltent, which returns to the lawn of the Gaillard Center for the season. Expect the all-female group from John's Island to perform their takes on holiday favorites backed by a lively horn section. The venue—outfitted with stained glass windows, a velvet draped ceiling, and a multitude of mirrors—also hosts Cabaret Royale by Underbelly this month. ***Charleston Gaillard Center, 95 Calhoun St. Sunday, 7:30 p.m. $25. (843) 724-5212, gaillardcenter.org***

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (GOSPEL CHOIR) BILL STRUHS & COURTESY OF (TREE) BEEMOK HOSPITALITY & (MARSHGRASS MAMAS) GAILLARD CENTER

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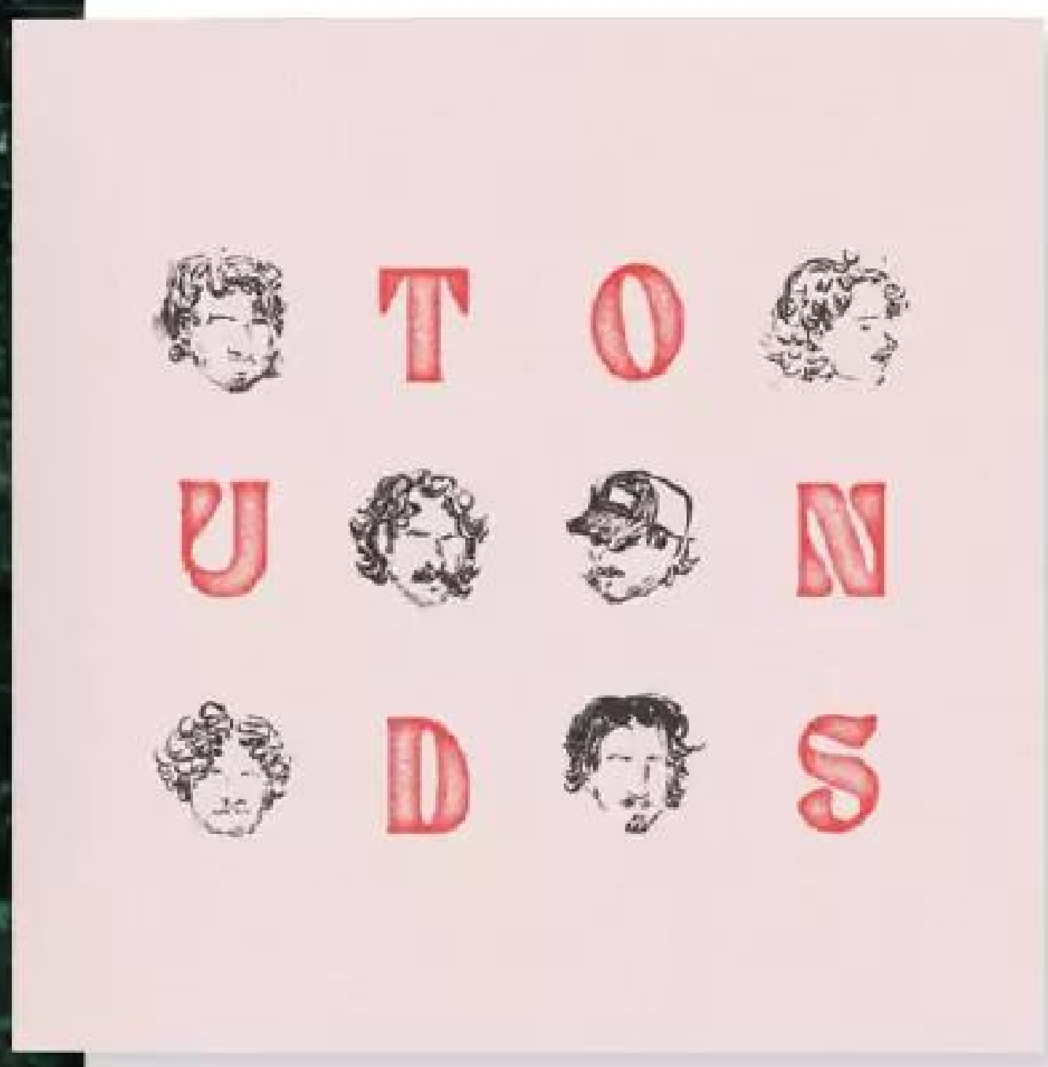
Talk of the Tounds

A new local supergroup channels early Americana with a resilient message

Since their debut, Tounds has played The Refinery, the beach stage at The Windjammer, and The Royal American (below), earning a near-instant following, thanks to the overlap of members from other bands. Hear them at Charleston Music Hall with Futurebirds on December 30.



The needle drops on "Take It Easy," the opening track on the Eagles' self-titled 1972 debut, and Keon Masters asks his Tounds bandmates, "Is there a more American album?"

The band members, gathered in Masters's living room for taco night, haven't known their lead singer long, but together, they've tapped into a timeless sound. Tounds puts an indie edge atop the breezy '70s feeling of acts like America, Jackson Browne, and the Eagles. Their debut album, *It's Spelled TOUNDS*, departs from the layered pop of Masters's longtime group, Brave Baby, in favor of acoustic, live band energy. Like The Band's era backing Bob Dylan, Tounds finds magic in pairing an accomplished songwriter with an established band.

Bassist Tommy Merritt and drummer Drew Lewis are the former rhythm section of Babe Club and two-thirds of the band Hollifield with Tounds guitarist Connor Hollifield. That trio is also the core of The Simplicity, another Charleston group with a notable new album in 2025 (*For Sale*), and the backing band for songwriter/producer Ryan Bonner and the Dearly Beloved. Bonner plays guitar in Tounds, and keyboardist Paul Chelmis rounds out the sextet. "What's cool about Tounds is that everybody has their own superpower," says Hollifield. "We take it seriously, but it all feels fresh and light."

Tounds formed in early 2025 over card games at City Lights Coffee. Hollifield, Merritt, and Lewis had seen Brave Baby as college students in Columbia a decade ago. Masters mentioned that he had a batch of new, unrecorded songs, and the trio offered to record with him at Bonner's John's Island studio, Loserville. Masters shared raw demos and gave the band open rein to develop the songs. "Since Tounds, every time I write, I'm happy with it," says Masters. "I don't have to think about the whole thing. I just focus on the message. The theme of *It's Spelled TOUNDS* is hope and resilience, written as Masters coped with trauma. On "Other Side of It Now," he sings about putting those wounds behind him. "Grocery Run" is even more direct: "Garden of ruin, seasons of losing/Nothing's growing back/When your whole life feels offtrack/Put on a movie that's gonna make you laugh/Get on the phone with the friends you have/Gossip for hours and remember that you are simply amazing," he sings, before promising, "I'm here patiently waiting/I will take on what you bring."

"They're personal songs," Masters admits. "I dealt with some demons. Singing these songs helps me shake the monkey off my back."

But Masters sings from an overhead view of his pain, at peace with the past. The album closes with "Do What You Can When You Can," a tale of a road trip with his dad to visit his grandfather in Arkansas.

> *"If people want to say we sound like Tom Petty meets Jimmy Buffett meets The Killers, that's a cool place to be."*
> *—Keon Masters, lead singer*

"We didn't set out for Tounds to sound like a throwback act," says Masters. "I just wanted us to sound live and honest. But if people want to say we sound like Tom Petty meets Jimmy Buffett meets The Killers, that's a cool place to be." —***Stratton Lawrence***

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (TOUNDS) & (COVER WITH ART BY KIANN MACKINNON) PAUL CHELMIS & (PERFORMANCE) CLIF RHODES

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Grace in Motion

Dancer Jordan Maria brings joy to the stage with her purposeful movement and positive energy

Jordan Maria has danced in the Charleston Christmas Special since she was 14 years old and credits producers Brad and Jennifer Moranz with teaching her technique as well as to have fun while onstage.

As a professional dancer and choreographer, Jordan Maria's movement has captivated audiences from Charleston's most prestigious venues to the sets of television shows, such as *The Righteous Gemstones*. With an impressive roster of collaborations, including the Charleston Pops, Ranky Tanky, and Annex Dance Company (where she's been a company member for three years), she has graced stages at TEDx Charleston and the International African American Museum.

The North Charleston native began her journey at the age of two at Dance Unlimited, where her inability to stop moving while watching her older sister's classes caught the attention of the instructors. That spark, nurtured by her family, led to eight formative years with Just Dance at Charleston Dance Center on James Island, before she honed her craft at the Charleston County School of the Arts and Charleston Dance Institute (now Palmetto City Ballet).

Jordan continued her education at the College of Charleston, where she studied dance and developed her versatile style. From improvised solo performances to collaborative pieces celebrating Black joy, Jordan's artistry serves a clear purpose: to bring positive energy and tell stories through dance. This month, see Jordan perform in the Charleston Christmas Special at the Charleston Music Hall. Here, she shares why she strives to be a light onstage and off.

Dance with Meaning: In 2020 [during the pandemic], I was worried about being able to continue my dance career because of theatre closures and auditions being postponed, but one day, I woke up and decided to make videos. I only made three, but they blew up because of George Floyd and the riots. I know my purpose is dance; to bring joy or tell a story.

Making a Connection: I get to perform every year in the Charleston Christmas Special at the Music Hall. I've been doing it since I was 14, so this will be my 13th year. Brad and Jenny Moranz have been the most influential in my dance career. They taught me all the techniques but also to have fun. When you just have fun and smile, you connect with the audience. I always remind

"When I was little, we used to sing 'This Little Light of Mine,' and I still live by that. I want to be a light in whatever I do." —Jordan Maria

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (PORTRAIT) MATTHEW CRUM, (CHRISTMAS SPECIAL) RIAN EMMERT PHOTOGRAPHY, & (JAZZ IN THE GARDEN) YOUR WORLD ON FILM FOR IAAM

myself that people are coming into a theater to find a place to escape for 90 minutes. When I was little, we used to sing "This Little Light of Mine," and I still live by that. I want to be a light in whatever I do.

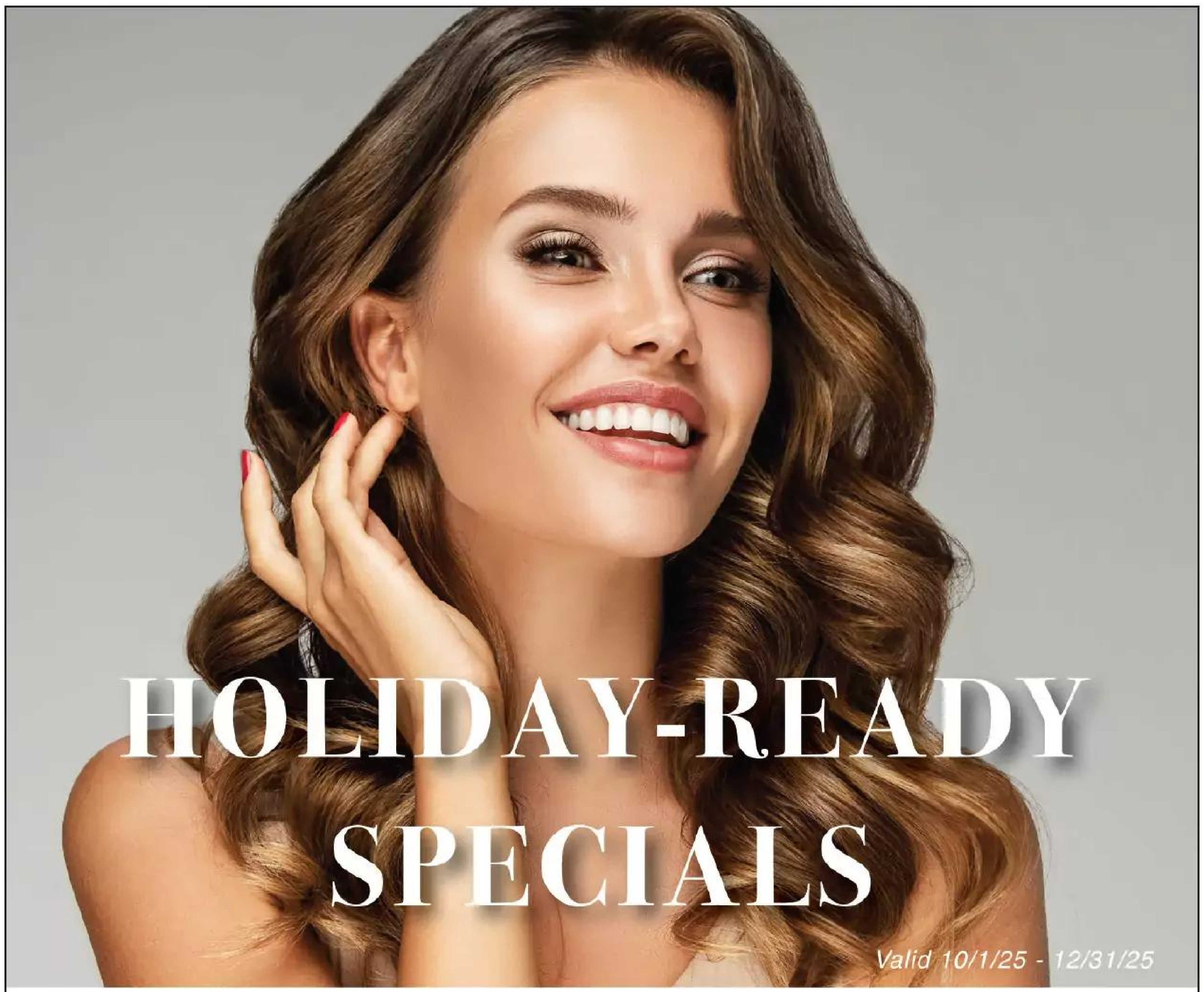
Memorable Performances: Last summer, I worked on *The Righteous Gemstones*. We did four, 12-hour days on set. It could be really hard, but I got to teach Adam Levine to do a jazz square, and two seasons prior, I worked with Joe Jonas. Twelve-year-old me would have freaked out! I told little Jordan, "You just taught Joe Jonas a line dance!" The performance at the International African American Museum was also really cool. I worked with the artist Mahoganee, who commissioned us for 100 days of Black joy and Black beauty, focusing on connecting the Black diaspora. I collaborated with my younger sister on the costumes—she created the looks—and Mahoganee provided the music. Also, being able to perform in a music video with Ranky Tanky—they're the coolest people in the whole world!

Current Work: I'm choreographing for the School of the Arts, teaching classes at the Dance Conservatory, and rehearsing for shows. I try to do at least one residency a year.

Jordan led a creative dance workshop during a Jazz in the Garden event at the International African American Museum in April.

This year, I'm working with Ashley River Creative Arts to bring hip-hop into their school. I'm also in rehearsal with Annex, and we have some amazing performances in the spring, including "Ripples of Change" on April 25 and 26 at the Emmett Robinson Theatre. —***Robin Howard***

Web EXTRAS **Rooted in Rhythm:** Watch Jordan Maria perform a dance in the African Ancestors Memorial Garden at the International African American Museum.



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In the Spirit

How the Caldwell family built South Carolina's largest German Christkindlmarkt —Daria Smith

Marianne Caldwell held the first Christkindlmarkt Charleston on her family's property in 2020, after a trip to Germany where she and her daughter visited 17 markets in 10 days.

Christkindlmarkt
CHRIST Child Market
Charleston

Each December, the quiet woods of Awendaw glow with old-world magic. Lantern lights flicker against the pines, fires crackle, and the air is rich with the scent of mulled wine and spiced smoke. Beneath a canopy of Moravian stars, artisans—a blacksmith at his anvil, a ceramicist at her wheel, a woodturner coaxing form from grain—sell their wares. This is Christkindlmarkt Charleston, a celebration held each year at RiverOaks Charleston along the Wando River that has become a cherished Lowcountry tradition. Yet its story began not with crowds or carols, but with a single, hand-carved wooden figurine.

In 1993, an au pair named Conny from Dresden, Germany, arrived in Mount Pleasant. That Christmas, she gave her neighbor, Marianne Caldwell and her family, a Räuchermann—a handcrafted wooden smoker man that exhales incense from a tiny pipe. Each year, her family sent another, until a whole village of whimsical figures filled the Caldwell home. "Our children thought everyone had these in their homes," Marianne recalls.

The figurines depict the trades of medieval Germany—hunters, peddlers, wood-carvers—and today, the Caldwells' collection presides over the market itself. The path from mantelpiece to marketplace was a winding one. RiverOaks Charleston, which the couple built as their family home, evolved into a sought-after wedding venue. For Caldwell, faith was always the root: the call to offer blessings generously and steward them well. In time, that conviction led her to reimagine the property in an entirely new way.

In 2018, she journeyed to Germany with her daughter, MerriCameron, visiting 17 holiday markets in 10 days. One in Riedenburg stuck with her. "It was in the woods, along torchlit trails, with fires burning, wooden huts strung with lights, a blacksmith pounding iron, and the smells of food and smoke in the air," she says. "It felt like stepping into another time."

Inspired, Caldwell and her daughter returned home and opened the first Christkindlmarkt Charleston with 11 stalls in 2020. Six years later, more than 4,000 visitors are expected over six days and eight market times. Forty vendors will fill the grounds, alongside $35,000 in handcrafts imported from Seiffen, Germany. Guests can sip Glühwein from Dresden mugs and gather by the fire for carols and evening vespers.

Authenticity has grown with each season. After guests noted the absence of a train, a German garden railway soon appeared. A towering tree, a hand-painted city sign, and a nativity scene followed. Now, the market offers imported treasures, as well as a stage for the next generation through its "kinder vendors" program.

At its heart, Christkindlmarkt Charleston is both an enterprise and a ministry. Proceeds support local charities such as the Star Gospel Mission. "It operates like a business because artisans depend on it," Caldwell says, "but it is also born of love, rooted in faith, and meant to share the true gift of Christmas."

BY THE NUMBERS

- ■ **4,000-plus:** People estimated to attend the 2025 market
- ■ **40:** Artisans and vendors
- ■ **6:** Number of markets held since 2020
- ■ **7:** Countries represented
- ■ **$35,000:** Value of imported German handcrafts
- ■ **150:** Volunteers

Web EXTRAS **Christmas Wishes:** Watch a video of Marianne Caldwell inviting visitors to experience her family's Christkindlmarkt in Awendaw at charlestonmag.com.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (3) ALEX THORNTON PHOTOGRAPHY & (TABLES) EMILY LETHKO

FROM THE HEART

Stareworthy's personalized children's books are designed to preserve memories

As a former professional family photographer, Lowcountry **entrepreneur Anna Stare** understands the value of preserving precious moments. Eager to come up with a unique, meaningful gift for her young niece, Stare created a storybook filled with personal photos, which caught the attention of friends and relatives.

The pandemic project evolved into **Stareworthy Custom Children's Books**, a business devoted to turning family photos into books that put loved ones in the center of the narrative, which launched nationwide in 2024. "Our books really help young children understand and process their own memories," she says. "We want to give gifts that aren't too commercial, and these books feel very personal and from the heart."

Stareworthy's lineup of books, which range from $30 to $95, are printed on thick, coated photo paper designed to be "indestructible to toddlers." Before uploading their images, customers can choose from multiple sizes and **more than a dozen templates**, with stories tailored toward ages ranging from newborns to kindergartners.

Anna Stare, founder of Stareworthy Custom Children's Books

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF STAREWORTHY

Many works celebrate the bonds children have with loved ones, as seen in *What Mommy Means to Me*, while others lean into educational values, such as best seller *Look & Read: Our ABCs*, or positive affirmations designed to build self-esteem, like recent release *Look How Pretty You Are.*

In the new year, Stare plans to add titles and partner with MUSC to **donate $1 from every purchase to the Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital**. Find a list of book templates at stareworthy.com.

—Holly Roberts

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The Power of Local

Lowcountry Local First provides support for area business owners and encourages shoppers to buy local—especially during the holiday season —Lauren B. Johnson

CHEF'S POTLUCK

Jacquie Berger (left) has served as the executive director of Lowcountry Local First since 2021; The nonprofit offers programs such as the Local Works coworking facility and the Community Business Academy, which provides training and resources for entrepreneurs.

Jacquie Berger remembers feeling like she'd "been given the keys to the kingdom" when she became executive director of Lowcountry Local First (LLF). The New England transplant by way of New York had participated in the nonprofit since moving to the Lowcountry in 2014. So when she stepped into the executive role seven years later and discovered "all the unique treasures" of the community, she was overjoyed. "The mission of this organization deeply resonates with me," she says.

Jamee Haley, Matt Bauer, and Andy Gowder cofounded LLF in 2007 to foster the community's wealth and well-being through programs that support local business owners. "There's a deep love for things built and made here and a desire to contribute to the fabric of our community," observes Berger. "It's a ripe environment for an organization focused on helping local businesses connect with their neighbors."

LLF's 700 members touch every sector, including food and beverage, wellness and beauty, construction and development, financial institutions, and local municipalities. Member businesses must keep more than half of their ownership in the Lowcountry. "These are the folks with the power to weave this local economy together by choosing vendors, making financial decisions, and dictating their brand aesthetic," notes the director. "When people support local business, three times more of the money spent stays here, creating more wealth and well-being for the Lowcountry."

> ***"There's a deep love for things built and made here and a desire to contribute to the fabric of our community."***
> ***—Jacquie Berger, Lowcountry Local First executive director***

To empower consumers, LLF recently rolled out the Localist card. Introduced during the nonprofit's holiday season Buy Local campaign, the card unlocks discounts and perks at area restaurants, boutiques, and service providers through 2026. "This card rewards you for choosing and supporting local businesses and helps you discover new ones to love," says Berger. With some 45 participating businesses in the Localist directory and more being added, cardholders can easily recoup the $25 cost. And for LLF, the Localist program provides measurable data to track its impact as well as a new revenue stream for its $1.3 million annual budget.

The funding supports a variety of efforts, including a small business marketing grant program, a crowdsourcing microloan initiative, professional guidance for fledgling bricks and mortar, and free consultations with experienced pros for emerging entrepreneurs. LLF's Community Business Academy, a 13-week boot camp offered in both English and Spanish, also provides training to traditionally overlooked entrepreneurs, promising graduates (who will number 400 by year's end) the resources and support to grow their ventures. Included is free membership and a discount to Local Works, LLF's hip Upper King Street coworking facility.

"We activate in really creative ways," says Berger. The organization hosts markets, teaches classes, advocates for nonpartisan policy changes, and organizes member meetups. "It's great to see people from different sectors enriching each other," she adds, citing the Estelle Colored Glass x Candlefish collab and the introduction of Bert & T's Desserts owner Christina Miller, a Community Business Academy graduate, to the Lowcountry Creamery dairy farmers at one of LLF's annual Chef's Potluck fundraisers. "The more connected and supported these businesses are, the more resilient we are as a community."

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The recently introduced Localist card provides discounts to area stores, restaurants, and service providers through 2026.

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The story of Joel Roberts Poinsett, the Charlestonian who introduced the Christmas plant to the United States

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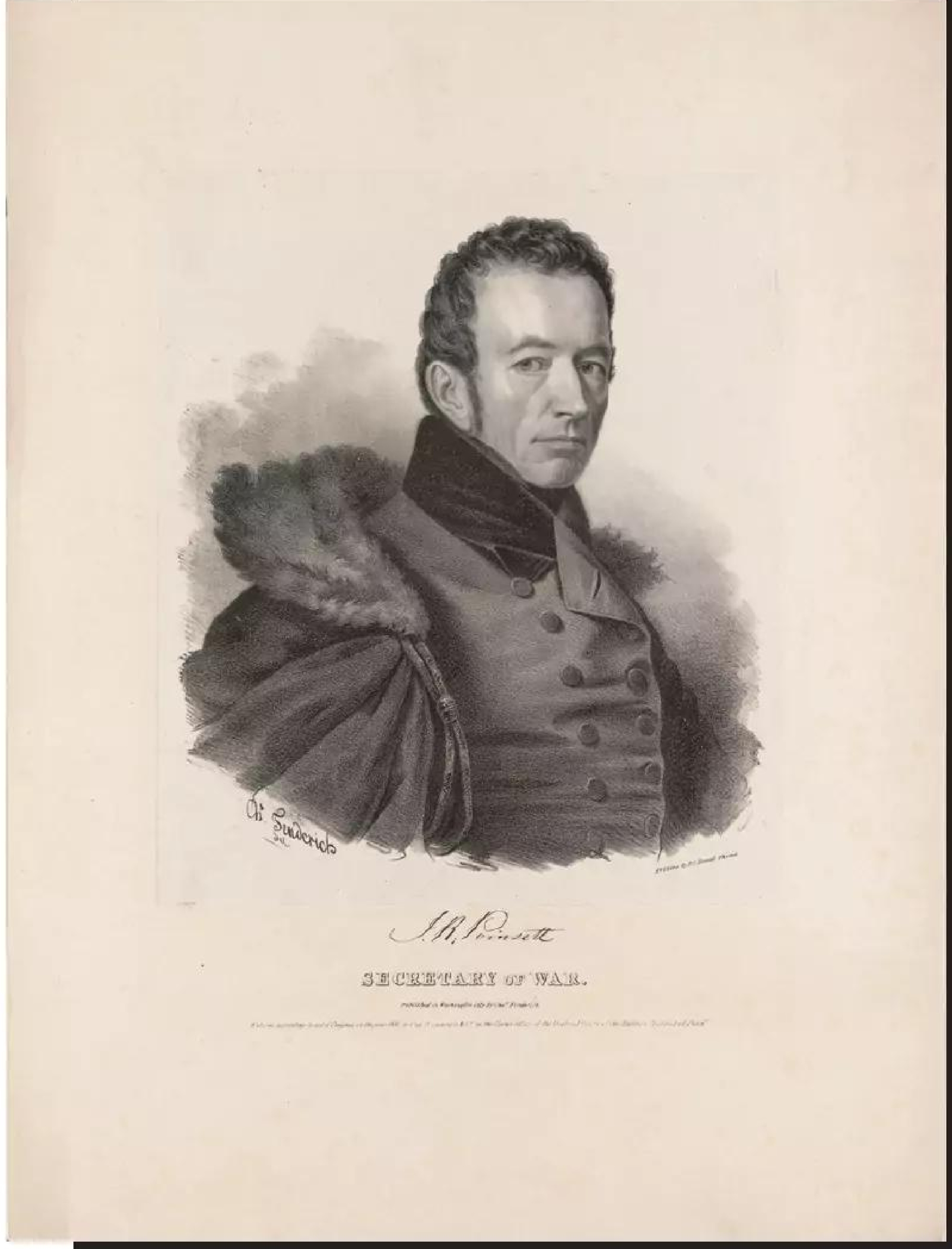
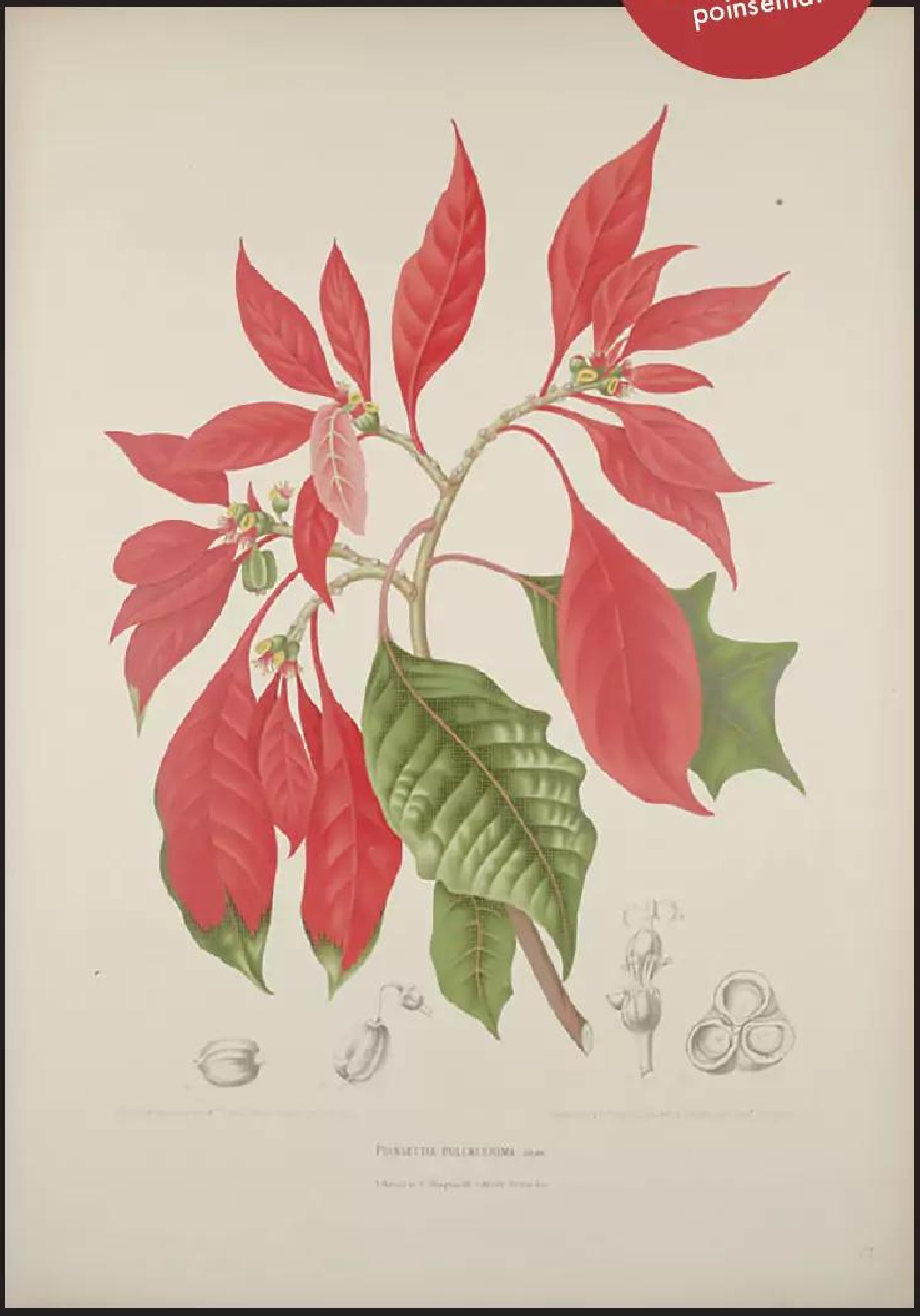

J.R. Poinsett
SECRETARY OF WAR.


Poinsettia pulcherrima

After serving as ambassador to Mexico, Joel Roberts Poinsett was appointed secretary of war. While in Mexico, he learned of the red-leafed plant that became known as the poinsettia in the US.

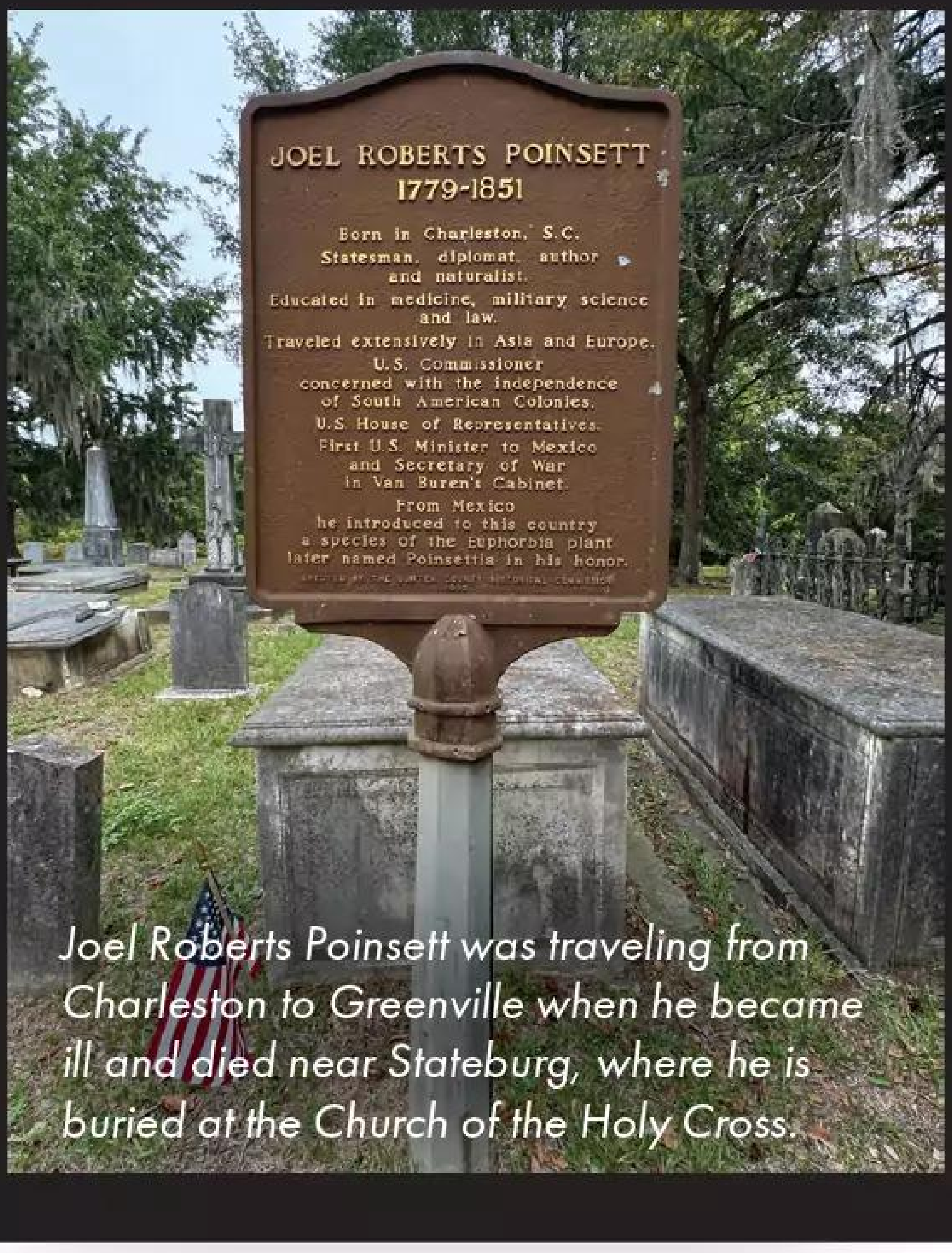
It's the perfect trivia question: which Charlestonian has a day on the national calendar named for him? The answer: Joel Roberts Poinsett, who was born here on March 2, 1779.

In 1801, after training as an attorney, Poinsett set off to educate himself further through travel—and not just via the then-standard European tour. When he stopped in Russia, Czar Alexander I tried to recruit him to join his government in Moscow, but Poinsett declined, after offering advice that Russia should not grow cotton. He then journeyed to the Caspian Sea, becoming one of the first Western travelers of the era to investigate the Middle East.

After meddling in international affairs in Chile and Argentina, Poinsett returned to South Carolina, where his fellow citizens elected him to the State Legislature and later to the US House of Representatives. When the United States recognized the Republic of Mexico in 1825, he became our first ambassador to the country and later served as secretary of war from 1837 to 1841 under President Martin Van Buren. During that time, Poinsett's department oversaw the removal of indigenous peoples west of the Mississippi in what became known as the Trail of Tears.

Dedicated to US government policies (he was pro-Union when South Carolina tried to nullify US laws in the 1830s), Poinsett had other interests, as well: as a young man in Persia, he had seen a pool of petroleum and believed it could be used as fuel one day. Later, in 1840, he helped launch the National Institute for the Promotion of Science and the Useful Arts, which advocated for the creation of what became the Smithsonian Institution.

However, it was Poinsett's interest in botany that made him a household name. In 1828, during his sojourn in Mexico, he became intrigued with a scarlet-leafed plant indigenous people called the cuetlaxochitl (kwet-la-SHO-sheet), translated as the "flower that withers." The Spanish called it "flor de Nochebuena" or "flower of Christmas Eve," and it became associated with the holiday after Poinsett sent cuttings home, where it was dubbed the "Poinsettia." In 2002, by act of the US Congress, December 12 became known as National Poinsettia Day in memory of the man who had died on the date in 1851, just as the leaves were turning red. —*Harlan Greene*


JOEL ROBERTS POINSETT
1779-1851
Born in Charleston, S.C.
Statesman, diplomat, author and naturalist.
Educated in medicine, military science and law.
Traveled extensively in Asia and Europe.
U.S. Commissioner concerned with the independence of South American Colonies.
U.S House of Representatives.
First U.S. Minister to Mexico and Secretary of War in Van Buren's Cabinet.
From Mexico he introduced to this country a species of the Euphorbia plant later named Poinsettia in his honor.

Joel Roberts Poinsett was traveling from Charleston to Greenville when he became ill and died near Stateburg, where he is buried at the Church of the Holy Cross.

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On October 9, *Charleston* staffers celebrated the magazine's big 5-0 with contributors, friends, advertisers, and Charleston Magazine Club members at The Cedar Room. Disco lights set the stage, and DJ Trevor D's tunes spanned the decades from 1975 to the present as partygoers saluted the momentous occasion.

DJ Trevor D set a jubilant mood as partygoers toasted the magazine's golden anniversary.

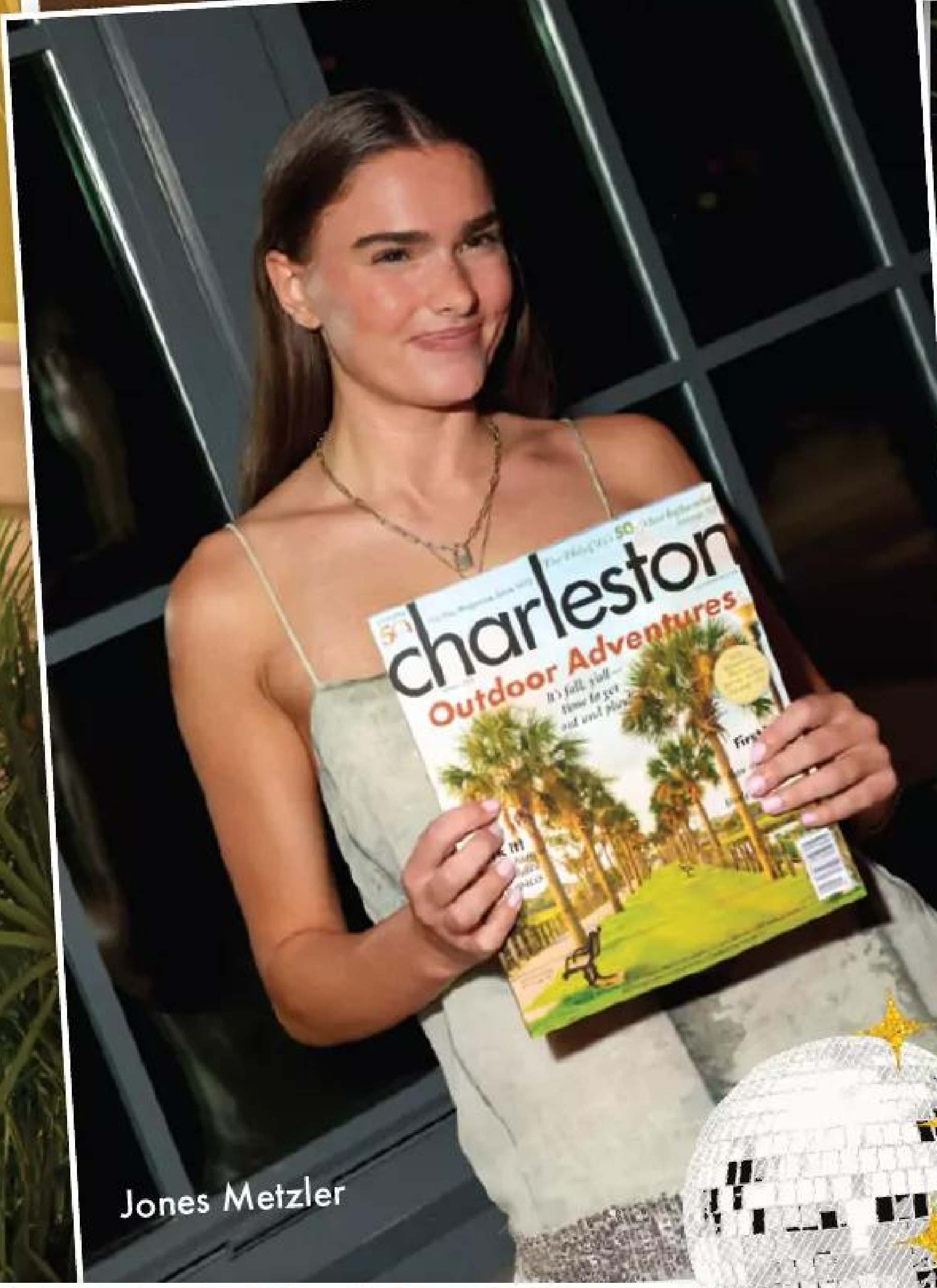
Some *Charleston* magazine staffers, past and present

Editor in chief Darcy Shankland, Noel Hunt, Wally Seinsheimer, and editor at large Stephanie Hunt

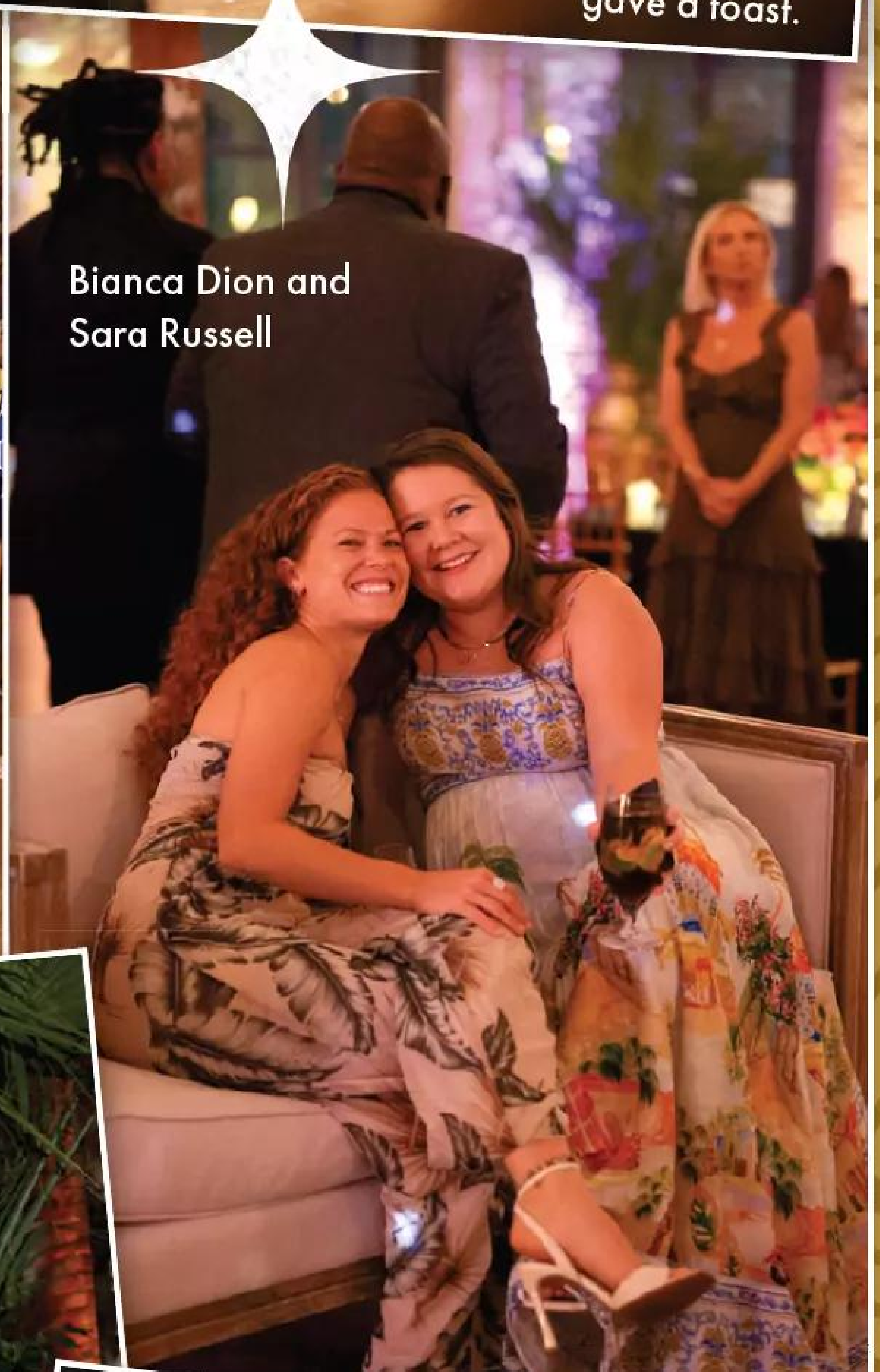
Don Luchi Wines cofounders David Kinloch, Justin Wages, and Andre Grundy

Stratton and Hunter Lawrence with Kate and Christopher Thornton

Editor in chief Darcy Shankland gave a toast.


Jones Metzler

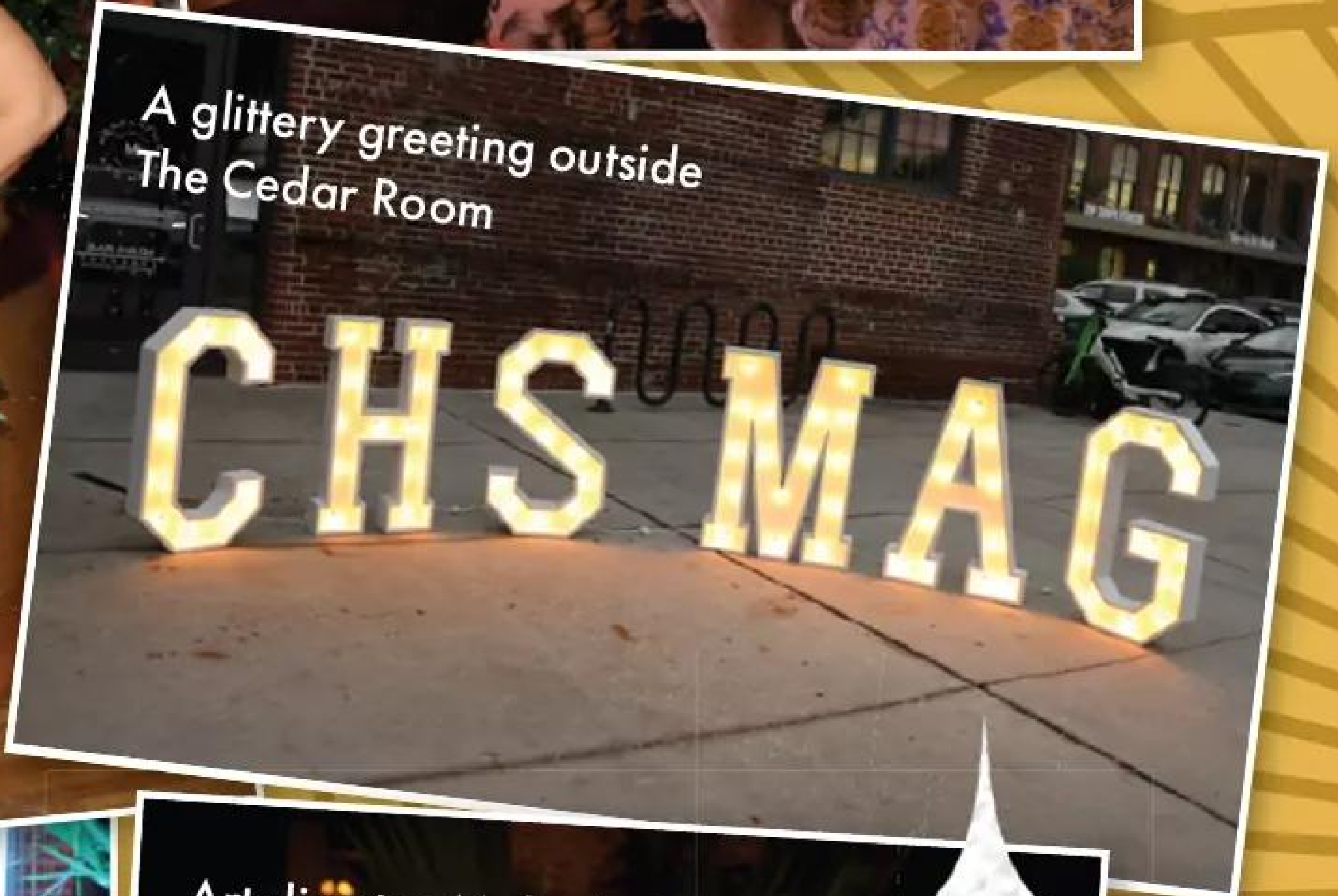
The team from O'Neill Plastic Surgery, the evening's sponsor


Bianca Dion and Sara Russell

Gorgeous blooms from Tiger Lily Florist

DJ Trevor D

Ashley Walsh and Alisa Connolly


A glittery greeting outside The Cedar Room

Stacey and Catherine Denaux, Sheri Pilley, Lisa Brechtel, and Pam Estoppey

Terry Fox and David Smalls

Anne Machowski and Jesús James

Art director Melinda Smith Monk with her husband, Lee

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style file

RENE BARNES'S TIMELESS STYLE // HOLIDAY RETAIL BUZZ

Soft Touch

/// **Elevate any outfit** when you add a layer of faux fur, such as this jacket with pearls and rhinestones from Dolce Cabo ($158 at Rhodes Boutique). Find more of the season's cozy outerwear and accessories in Scouting Report. **See page 66**

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF RHODES BOUTIQUE

1

2

3

4

5

6

PHOTOGRAPHS (6) COURTESY OF THE RETAILERS

ALL THE FEELS **1. J. McLaughlin** "Lainey" neckwarmer in "sand" and "brown," $88 each at J. McLaughlin **2. Herno** zip hoodie, $715 at Gwynn's of Mount Pleasant **3. Rachel Comey** muff coat, $950 at Showroom **4. Ivy Jane** jacket in "ivory," $180 at Lounge With Us **5. Veronica Beard** "Griselda" coat in "sable," $798 at Veronica Beard **6. JuJu Loves** jacquard coat with shawl collar, $598 at jujuloves.com

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Rene Barnes

Whenever the College of Charleston grad wandered into a jewelry store, she was filled with joy, but noticed that it was rare to find pieces with character. So, in 2022, the Hartsville native called on her background in studio art, sculpture, and interior design to launch her fine jewelry collection with pieces crafted to feel personal and intended to become treasured heirlooms. The self-taught designer's hand-sculpted solid gold pieces with her signature finish can be found at her showroom and on her website, as well as at select retailers, including RTW and Wentworth. Here, Barnes shares her treasured holiday traditions and where she shops for thoughtful gifts.

Q Tell us about a favorite design and how you style it.

A The "Classic" diamond necklace and earrings, paired with the "Crown Diamond Cuff," are some of my go-to pieces. They play beautifully with everything and add just the right touch of sparkle.

golden child
sunshine revival cleanser

Q What are your must-have skin-care products?

A Rawlins Studio is a must. Kate Rawlins gives the best facials, and without her, I'd be lost. Golden Child Cleanser (above) goes everywhere with me; it's the best cleanser on the market.

Q What are your plans for the holidays, and what will you wear?

A We gather everyone and host Christmas in Charleston. Our big cocktail party on Christmas Day has become one of our most treasured traditions. I'm definitely wearing a pair of Manolos from RTW. I love splurging each year and picking out a pair. It's fun to look back in my closet and see shoes that instantly remind me of that Christmas.

Q Who is one of your most-admired local makers?

A Lia Burke Libaire did a snail painting for us, and it's one of my favorites in our house. It's a constant reminder for me that good things take time. Her stationery (above) makes a great gift.

"My style is timeless and rooted in quality."

Q What's your ideal gift for others for the holidays?

A I always try to think about the person I'm buying for, choosing an object that could complement their home and be cherished forever, such as this Gaius Octavian platter (above), available at Wentworth. Wentworth always does the trick for me when it comes to anything gift related.

Q Have anything in your wardrobe you couldn't live without?

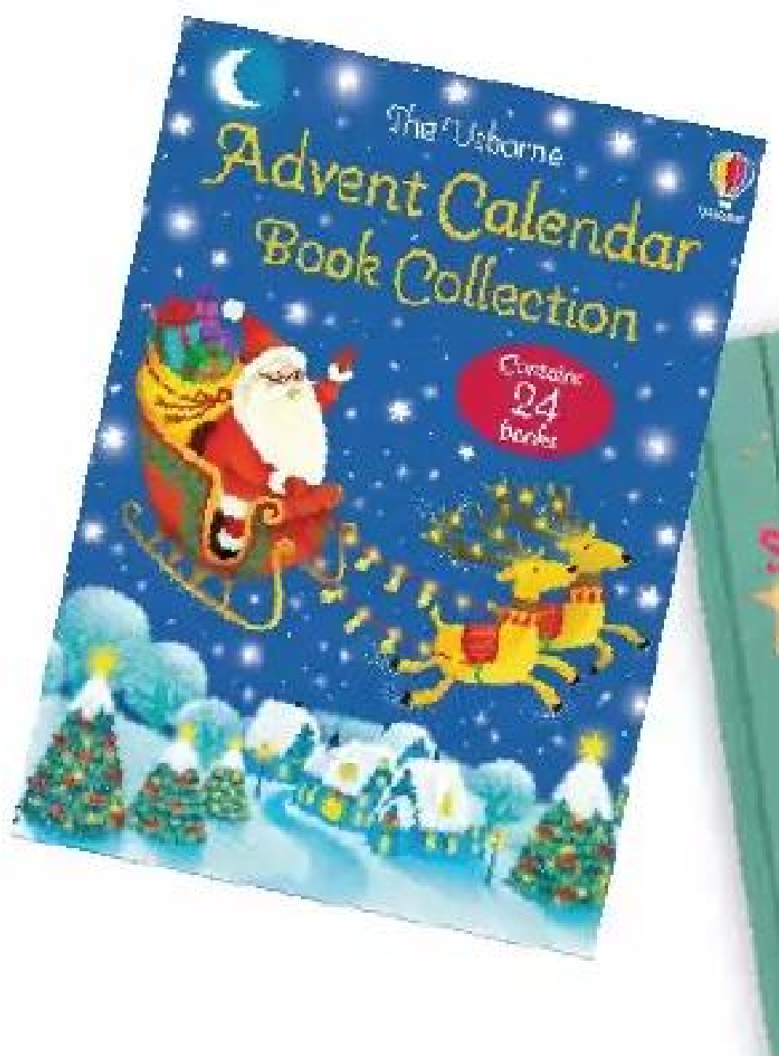
A My vintage Levi's jeans and my "Carissima" diamond ring (above).

Q What's on your personal holiday wish list this year?

A I'm eyeing a Tagliovivo "Sella" bag (right) from Worthwhile.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (BARNES) CHRISTIAN DICROCE & COURTESY OF (JEWELRY-3) RENE BARNES & (4) THE BRANDS & RETAILERS

UNDER THE ALMOND TREES
LITTLE ALMOND BLOSSOMS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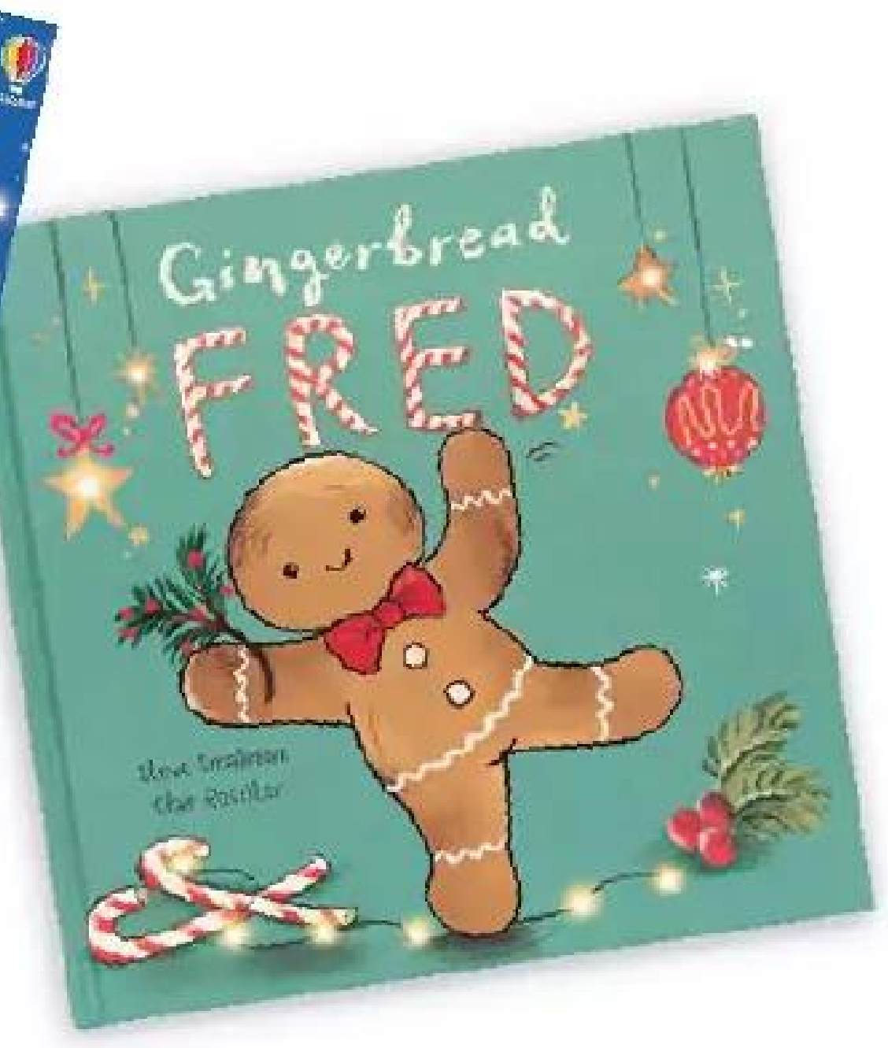
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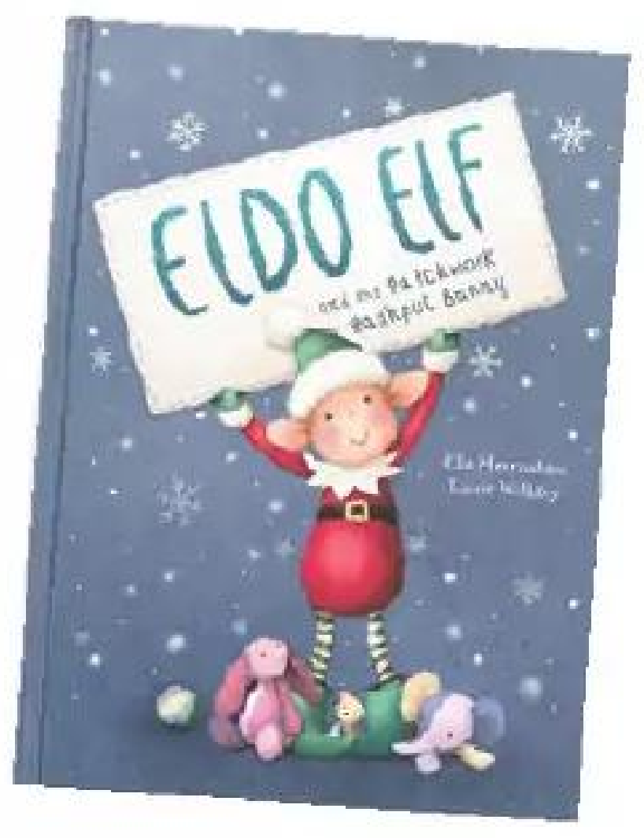

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Get your skin party-ready for holiday festivities or take a break from the season's hustle and bustle at Woodhouse Spa's new Charleston location in the Wentworth Mansion. There, hotel guests, as well as locals, can enjoy a signature hydrafacial for a youthful glow, a "Calming Retreat" massage that blends several techniques for the ultimate relaxation, or the three-and-a-half hour "Digital Detox" package, in addition to seasonal treatments. The spa also offers a couples suite and private events for bridal parties or girls' weekends. Owner Kim Powell opened a Woodhouse franchise in downtown's Westedge development in 2020. She also owns locations in Mount Pleasant; Savannah, Georgia; and Franklin, Tennessee. **[141 Wentworth St., woodhousespas.com]**

Kim Powell opened her third area Woodhouse Spa franchise in the historic Wentworth Mansion this fall.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Customize a colorful bag or accessory with a selection of whimsical patches at Stoney Clover Lane's new store on King Street. The brand—launched by sisters Kendall and Libby Glazer in 2009 when they were teenagers in Palm Beach, Florida—is a favorite among college students, as well as brides, young moms, and frequent travelers. Its versatile pouches, fanny packs, and backpacks can be decorated with an assortment of patches, including letters and other icons. Look for the "Charleston" patch and the recently introduced Tiger & Eloise apparel. "Charleston is such a perfect fit for girls' trips, bachelorette weekends, and anyone visiting for a fun getaway. But we also designed the space to feel like a neighborhood favorite—a place locals can pop into again and again to personalize something special or grab one of our exclusives," Kendall said in a news release. **[316 King St., stoneycloverlane.com]**

NEW DIGS

Local jewelry designer Laura Cohen has relocated her Little Bird boutique from Queen Street to a larger and more visible location near the intersection of King and Radcliffe streets. The former accountant's minimalistic jewelry features carefully curated gems—including moonstones, turquoise, rose quartz, and pearls—many of which are believed to offer mood-boosting properties. The new space features a custom jewelry experience, as well as Imbali Charleston pajamas, She Biology skin care, and other clothing and self-care products. Cohen opened her first store on Queen Street in April 2024. **[469 King St., littlebirdchs.com]**

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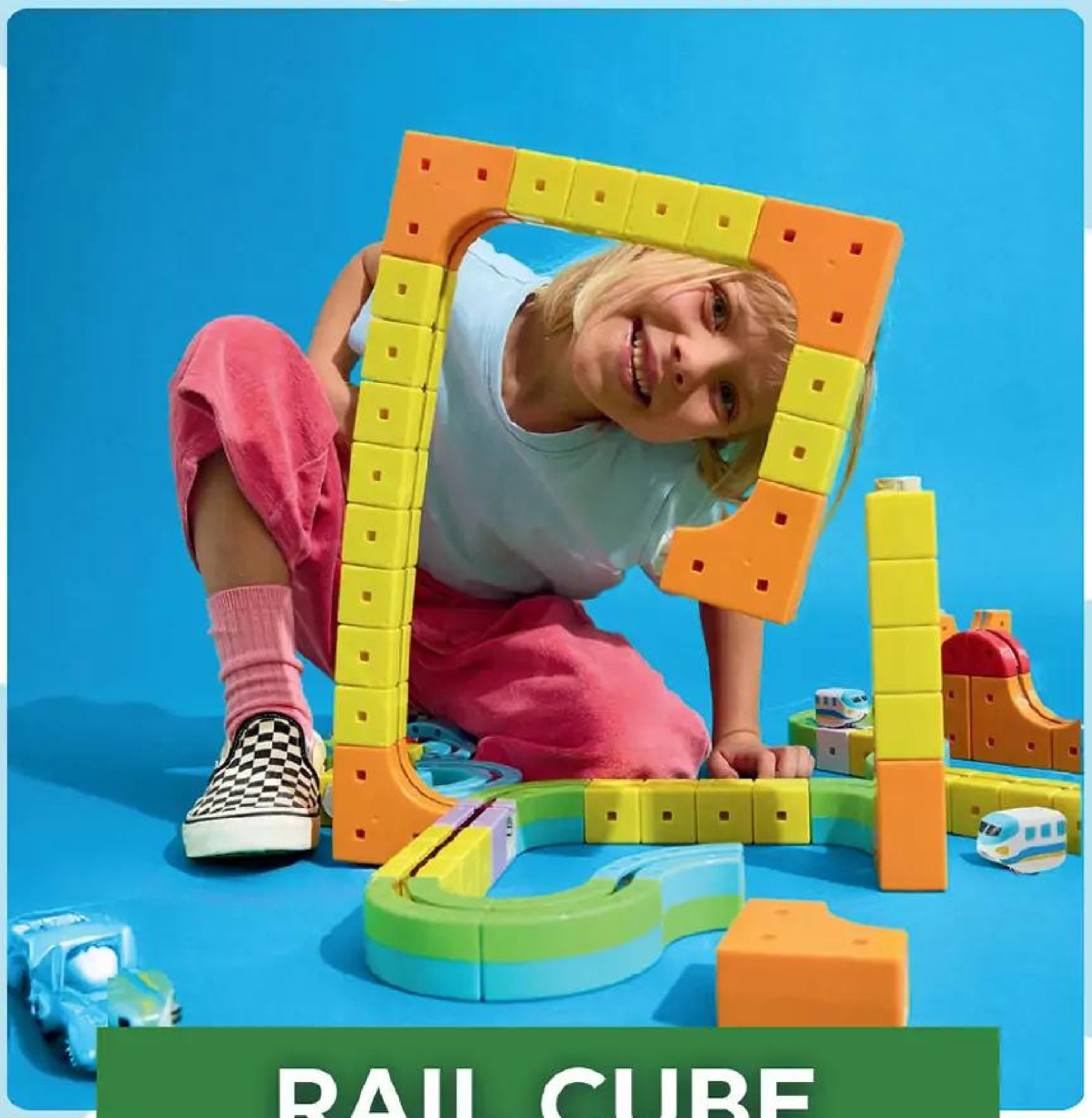

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/// **This renovated, turn-of-the-century Craftsman** in the heart of downtown Charleston proves that historical character and contemporary comfort can go hand in hand. **See page 77**

PHOTOGRAPH BY LESLIE MCKELLAR

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THE CHARLESTON HOME

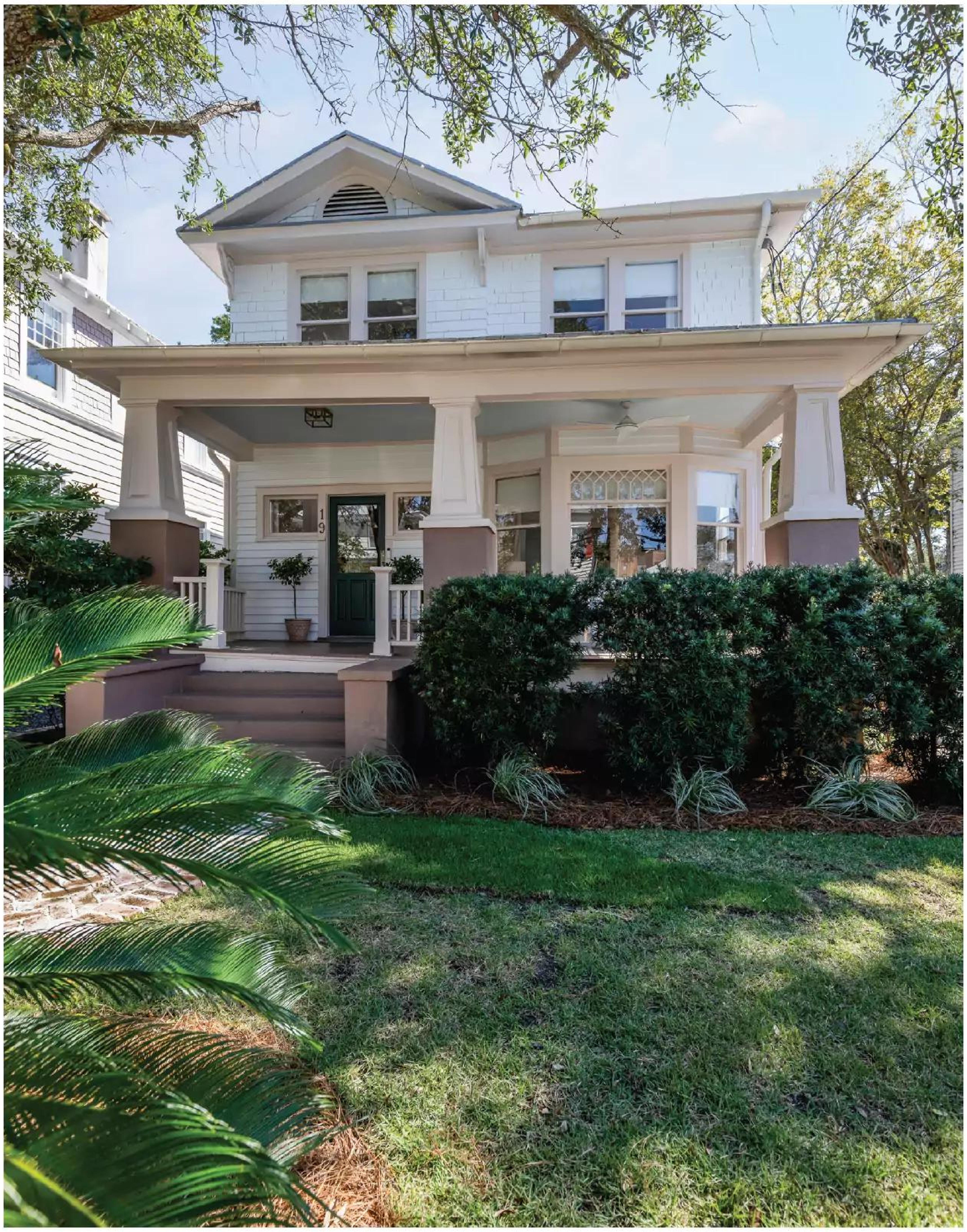
Craftsman Revival

Morgan and Danny Paterson blend historical charm with modern functionality in a lovingly restored circa-1910 home in Harleston Village —*written by* JENNIFER PATTISON TUOHY

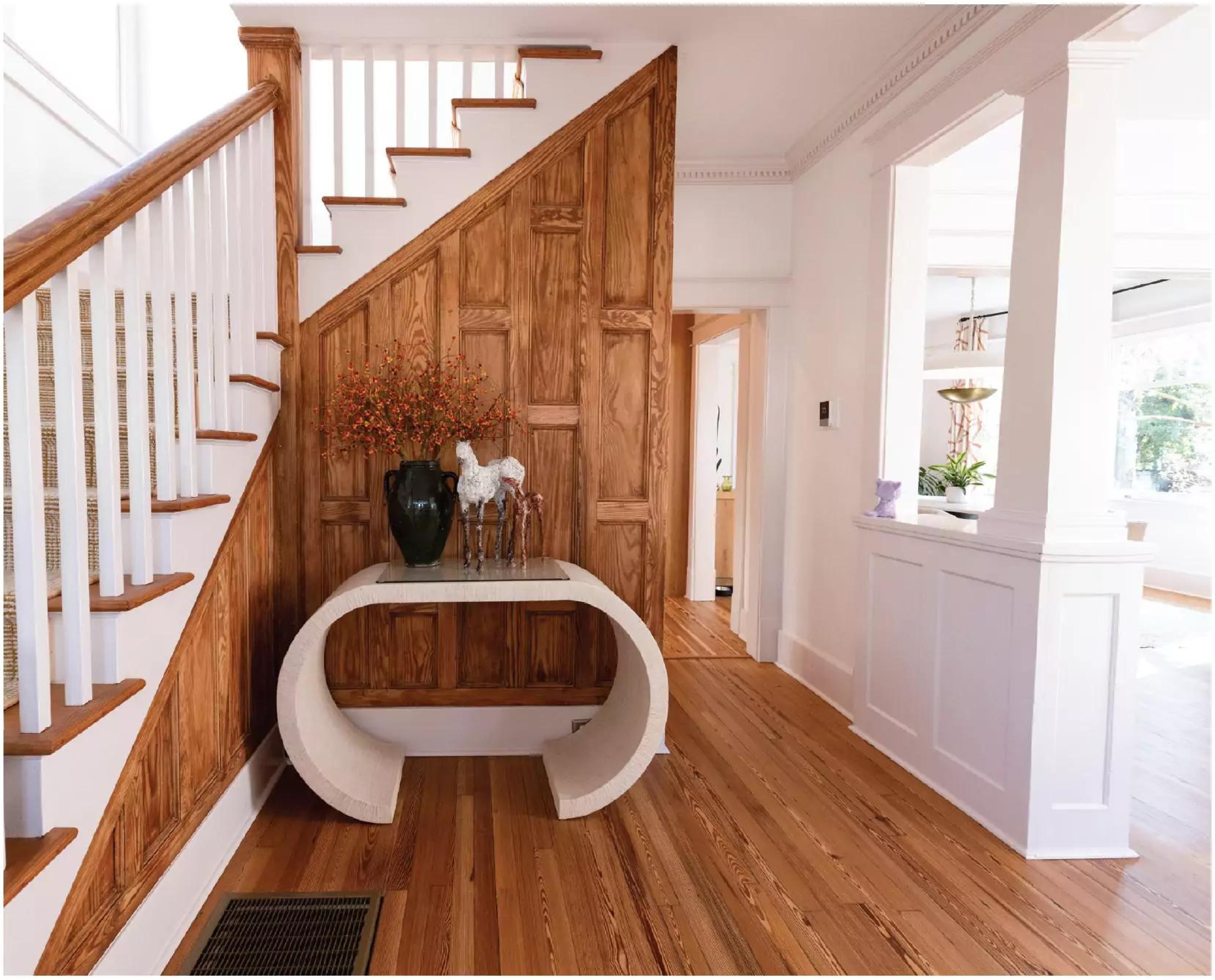
/// *photographs by* LESLIE MCKELLAR & AMANDA BOUKNIGHT

Deep, welcoming, and supported by tapered columns resting on sturdy brick piers, the Craftsman-style front porch at 19 Bennett Street sets the tone for this gracious downtown home. Step inside, and layers of history unfold, thoughtfully refreshed by Danny and Morgan Paterson, who have woven modern comforts into the 115-year-old structure with unmistakable charm.

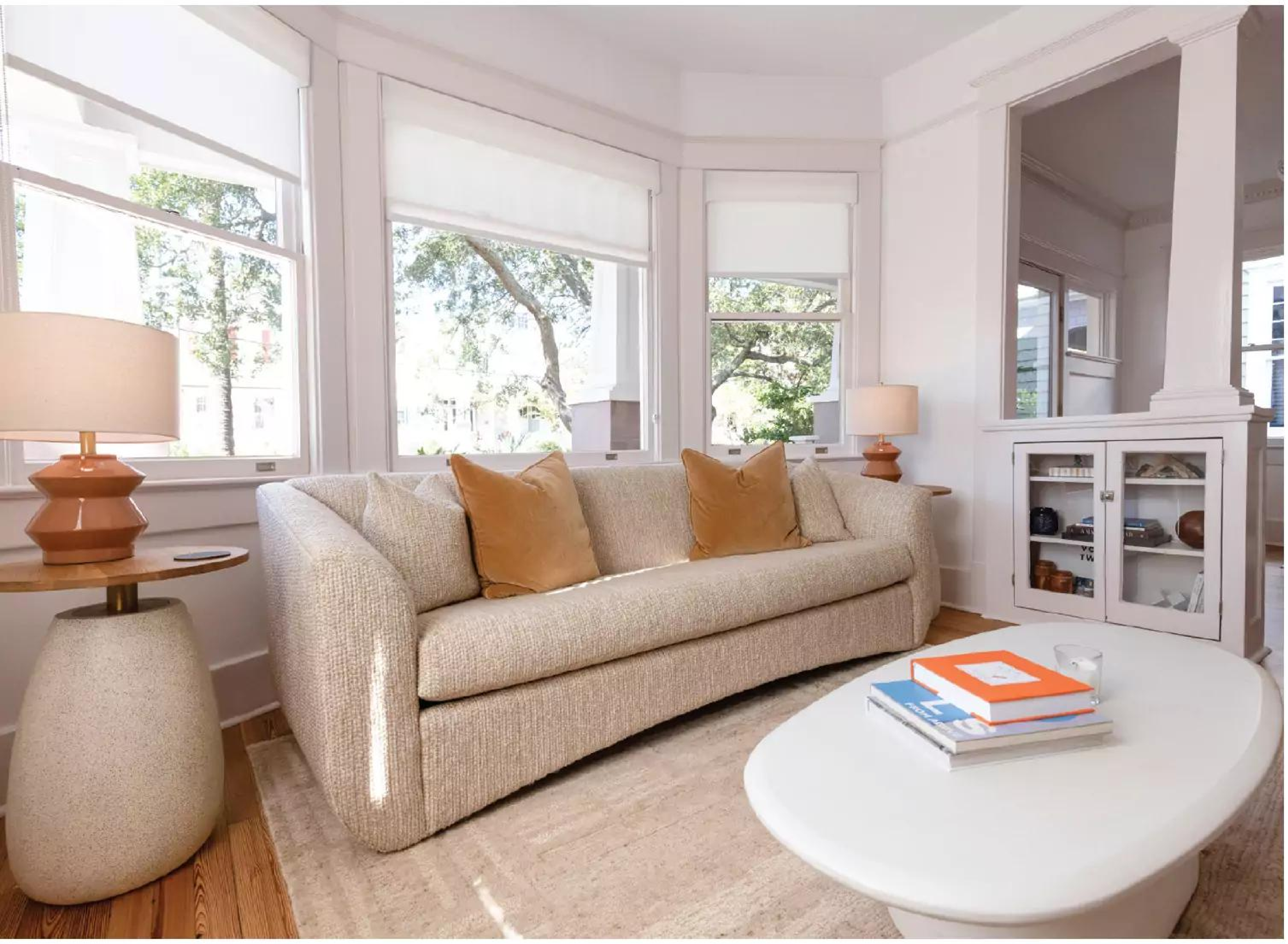
"Its original layout was intact, which is unusual," says Danny. "The rooms were still separate, which gives a cozy intimacy you don't get in a lot of updated historic homes." For Morgan, two things sealed the deal: the large yard and the location. Ready to move on from their 1,200-square-foot bungalow in



MODERN HERITAGE: Morgan and Danny Paterson (left, with daughter Holland) fell for this Craftsman cottage on the lower peninsula—drawn to its charm, central location, and spacious lot. Working with Melissa Limehouse and Jamie Price of Haven Interior Design, they renovated the home to suit their lifestyle, while honoring its historic character.



TIMELESS BEAUTY: Layers of paint were painstakingly removed to reveal this stunning original heart pine accent wall in the foyer. A grasscloth-covered console from Chelsea House and Sherwin-Williams "Cultured Pearl" painted trim accentuate the rich honey color of the wood. (Below) The living room features original built-in cabinetry and columns, along with wide windows that welcome in the light. A low cocktail table from Dovetail Furniture and a curved sofa from Precedent, accented by Surya lamps and spherical side tables, create an inviting space.



Wagener Terrace, the couple was drawn to Bennett Street's proximity to Ashley Hall—the school their daughter, Holland, would soon attend.

The Patersons arrived in Charleston more than a decade ago—Morgan in 2014 to complete a physical therapy rotation and Danny a year later to launch his property-management company, The Boroughs, after a consulting career that took him to South Korea. Though both are Virginians and Virginia Tech grads, they didn't meet until mutual friends introduced them in the Holy City. Marriage followed in 2018, and the next year, Holland was born.

As the Paterson family grew, so did their need for space. Their search took them across the bridge to the Old Village and out to Sullivan's Island, where they rented for a short stint. But when they discovered the Bennett Street house, it was love at first sight. "It's a beautiful old home but incredibly

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LAYERED COMFORT: (Opposite) The first-floor palette transitions from light and airy in the front to moody and sumptuous toward the back, where this den features a richly colored William Morris wallpaper and saffron velvet CR Laine sofa. All of the fabrics throughout the home are performance-grade, allowing Holland and Tallulah, the family dog, free rein. A sculptural Arteriors cocktail table, Precedent swivel chairs, and Four Hands marble side tables reflect the couple's penchant for contemporary furnishings.

functional, especially for downtown," Danny says. "We have a double driveway, which is practically unheard of; a fenced backyard; and a screened porch—that was one of Morgan's nonnegotiables."

The walkability of the neighborhood clinched it. Situated in Harleston Village between MUSC and Colonial Lake, the location is accessible to most of downtown. "We walk everywhere," Morgan says. "I feel like I live in New York City, but with the charm of Charleston."

Built in 1910, the 2,200-square-foot, four-bedroom home is one of a handful of Craftsman-style residences on the lower peninsula. Rooted in the early-20th-century Arts and Crafts Movement, the style celebrates natural materials and clean-lined workmanship over the ornate flourishes of the Victorian era. The Patersons sought to preserve

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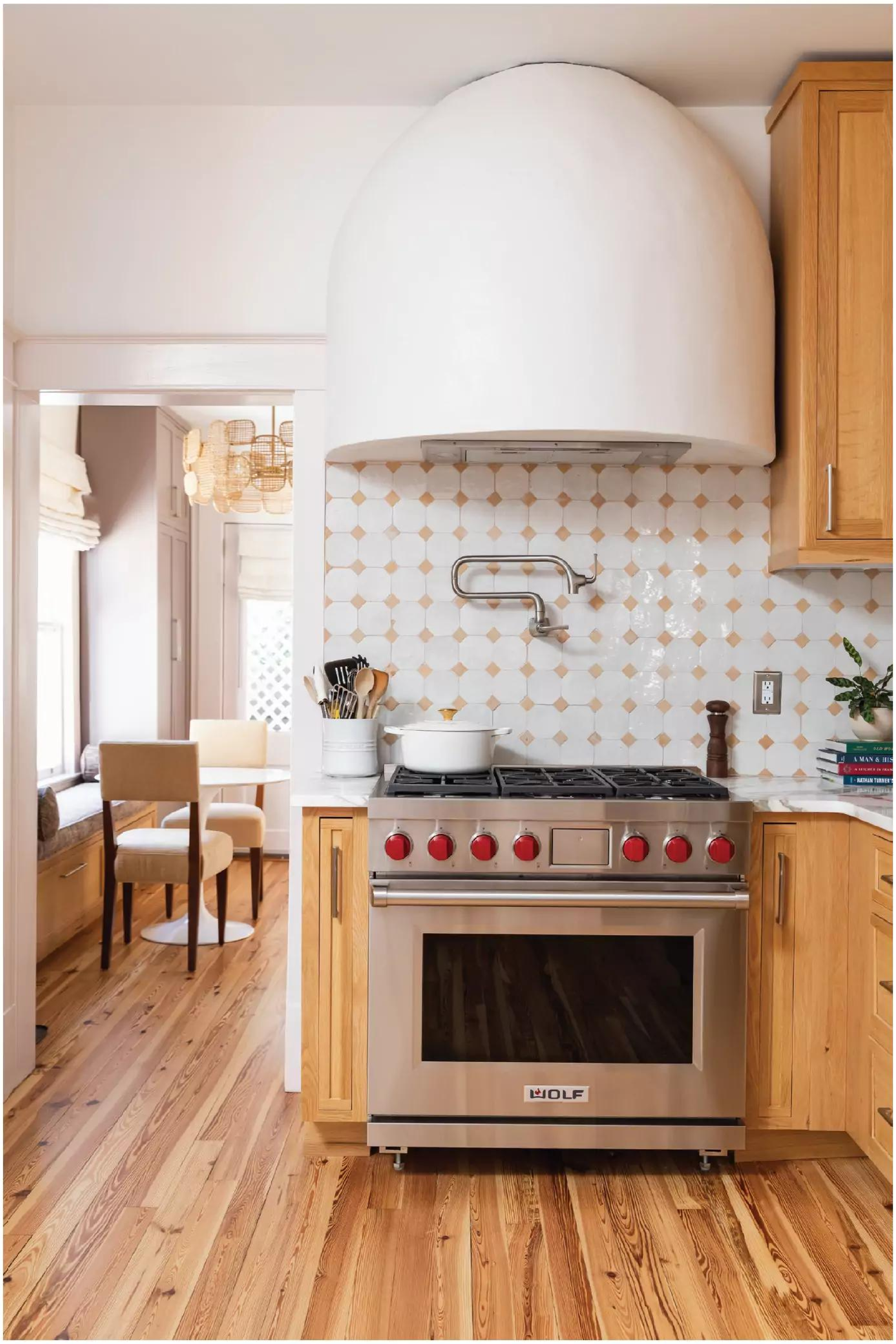

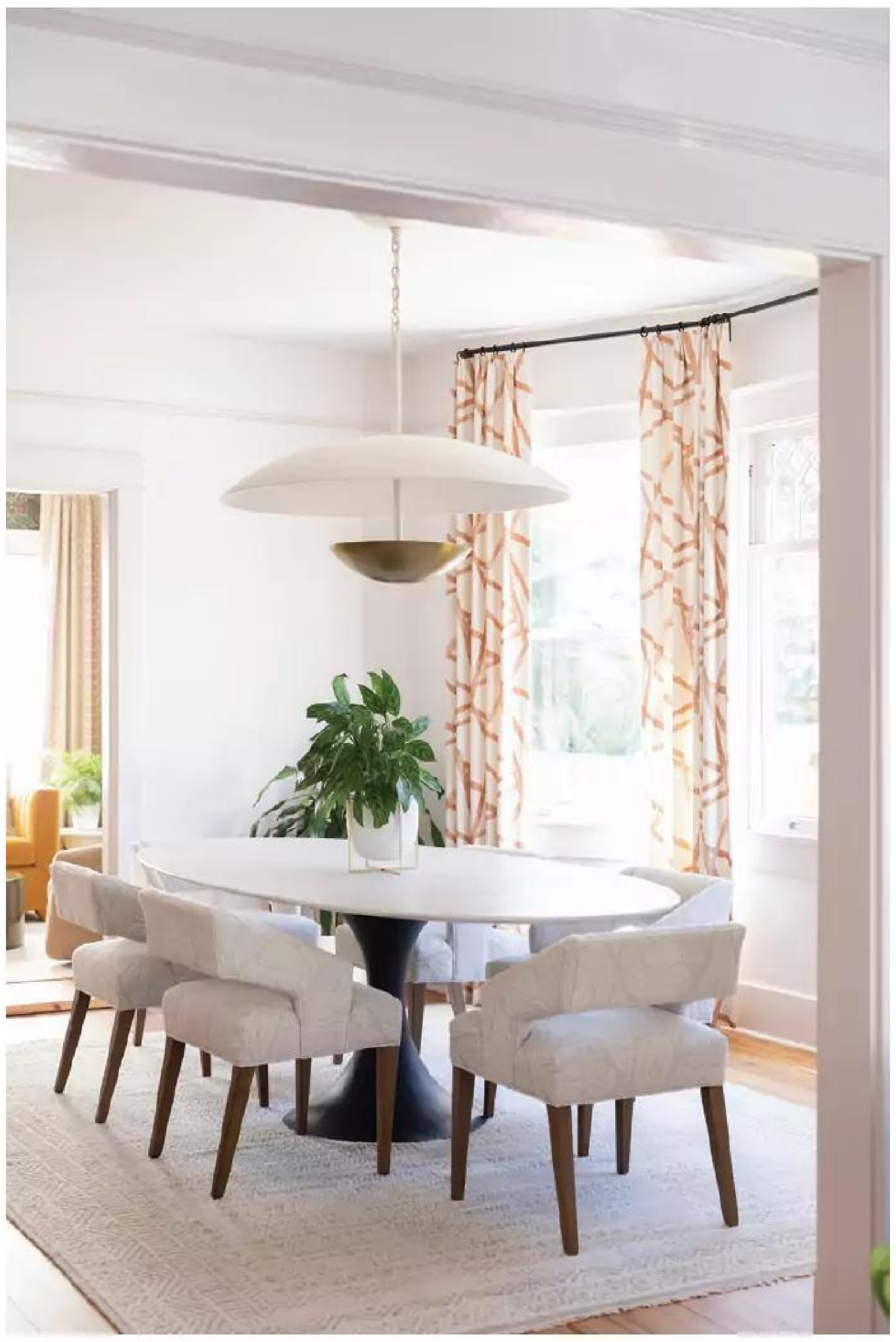

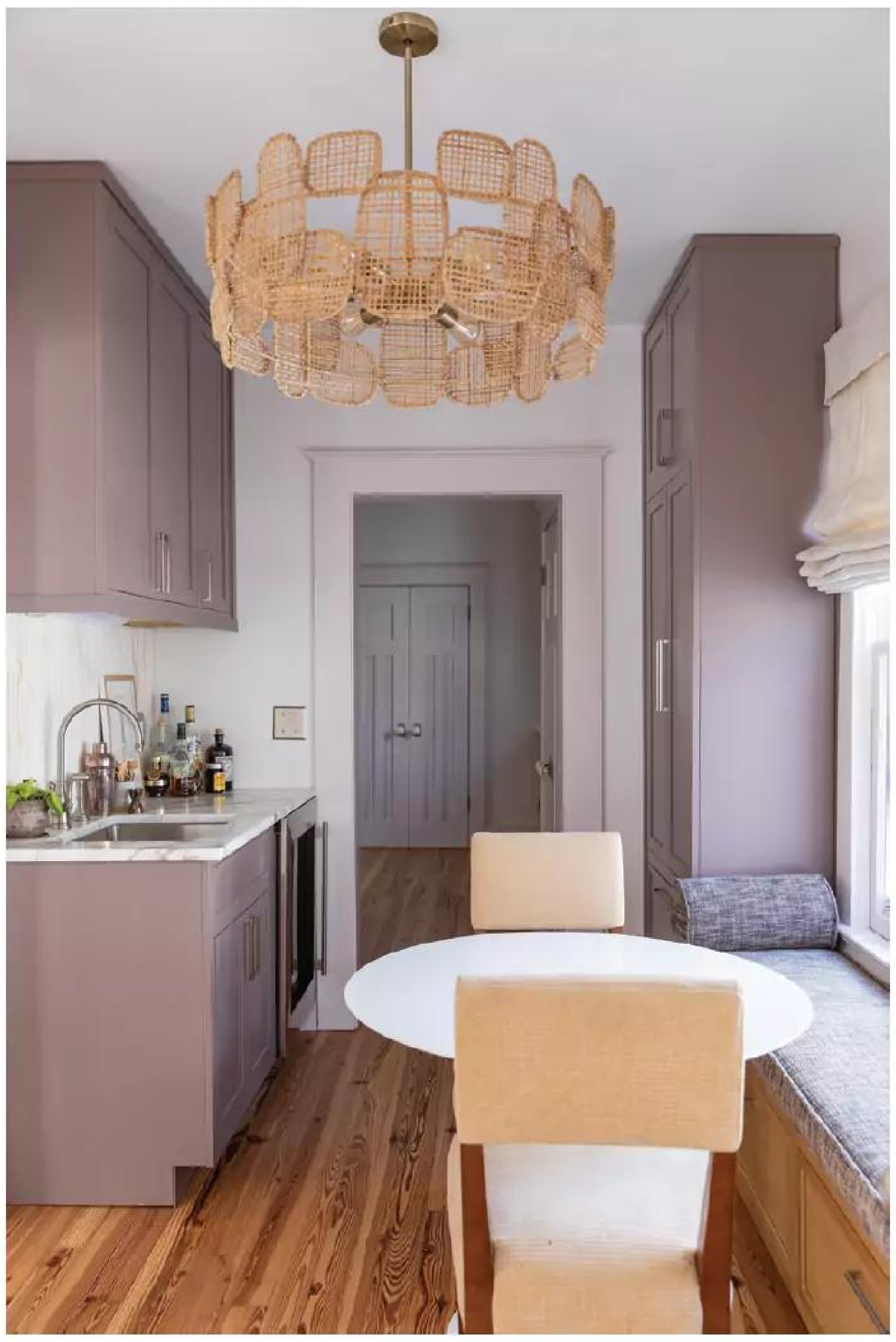

REFINED TASTE: (Counterclockwise from above) The long, narrow kitchen was completely renovated to incorporate top-of-the-line Wolf appliances for Danny, who loves to cook. A custom plaster hood and handmade Moroccan tile complement the white oak cabinets. Beyond the kitchen lies a breakfast room/wet bar, where an Arteriors light fixture illuminates a Knoll "Saarinen" table paired with a custom window bench covered in Harlequin tweed fabric. The dining room features a Julian Chichester dining table surrounded by CR Laine damask-wrapped chairs and accentuated by a curved Theodore Alexander chandelier.

those details while tailoring the interiors for contemporary life.

They teamed up with designers Melissa Limehouse and Jamie Price of Haven Interior Design, who had helped them with their previous house, to create a functional space for the family while honoring the home's history. They stripped away decades of paint to reveal

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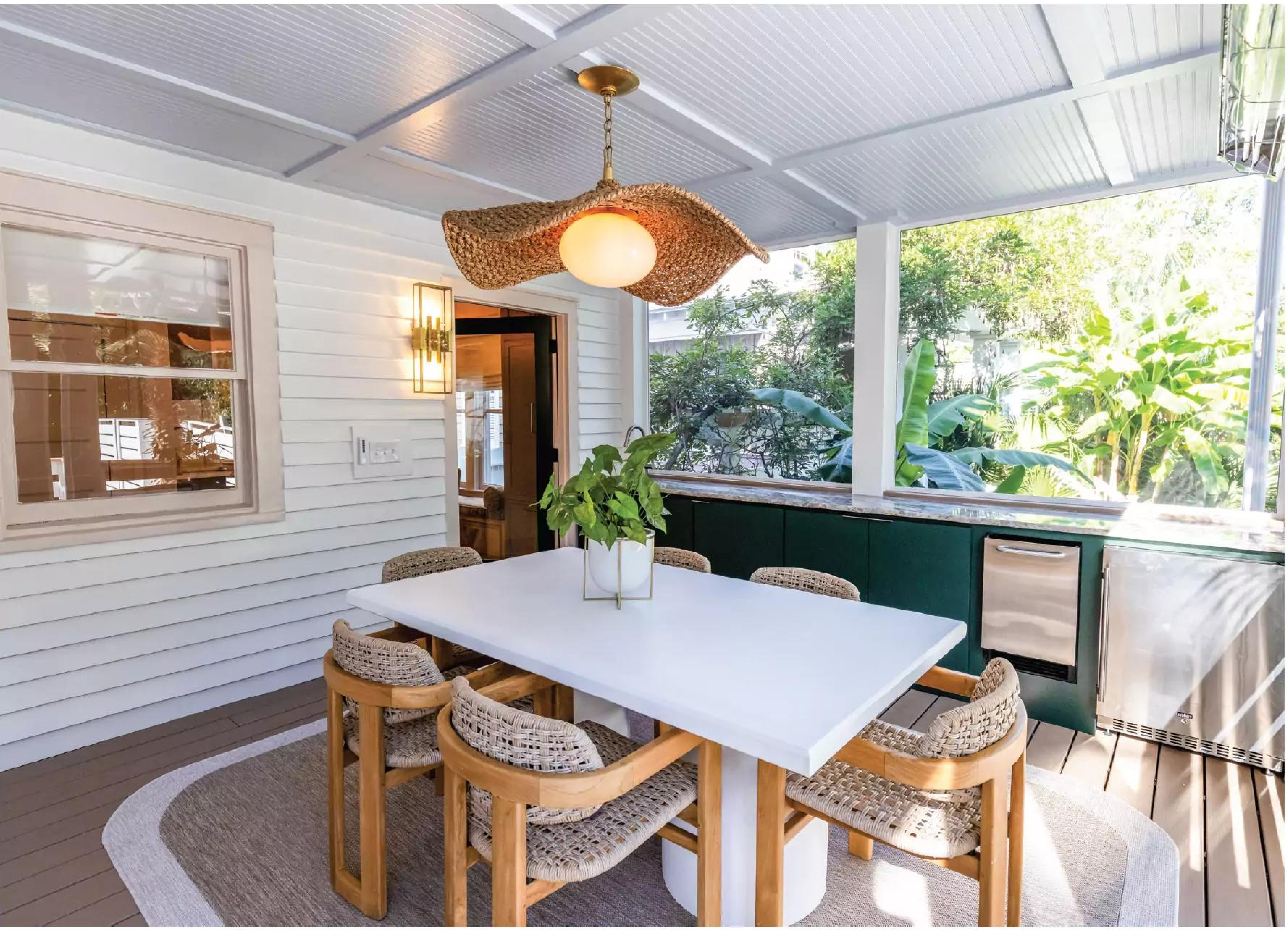
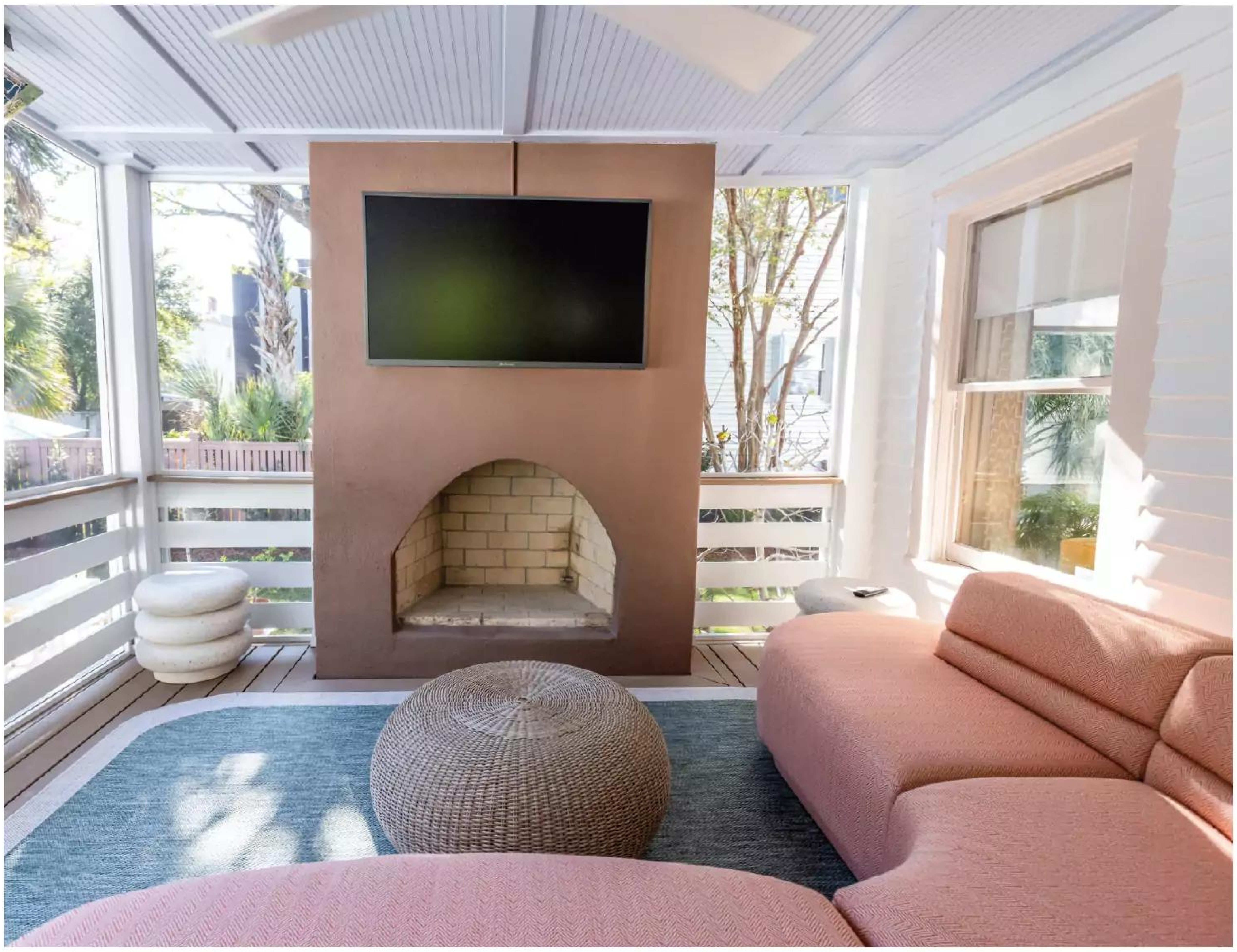


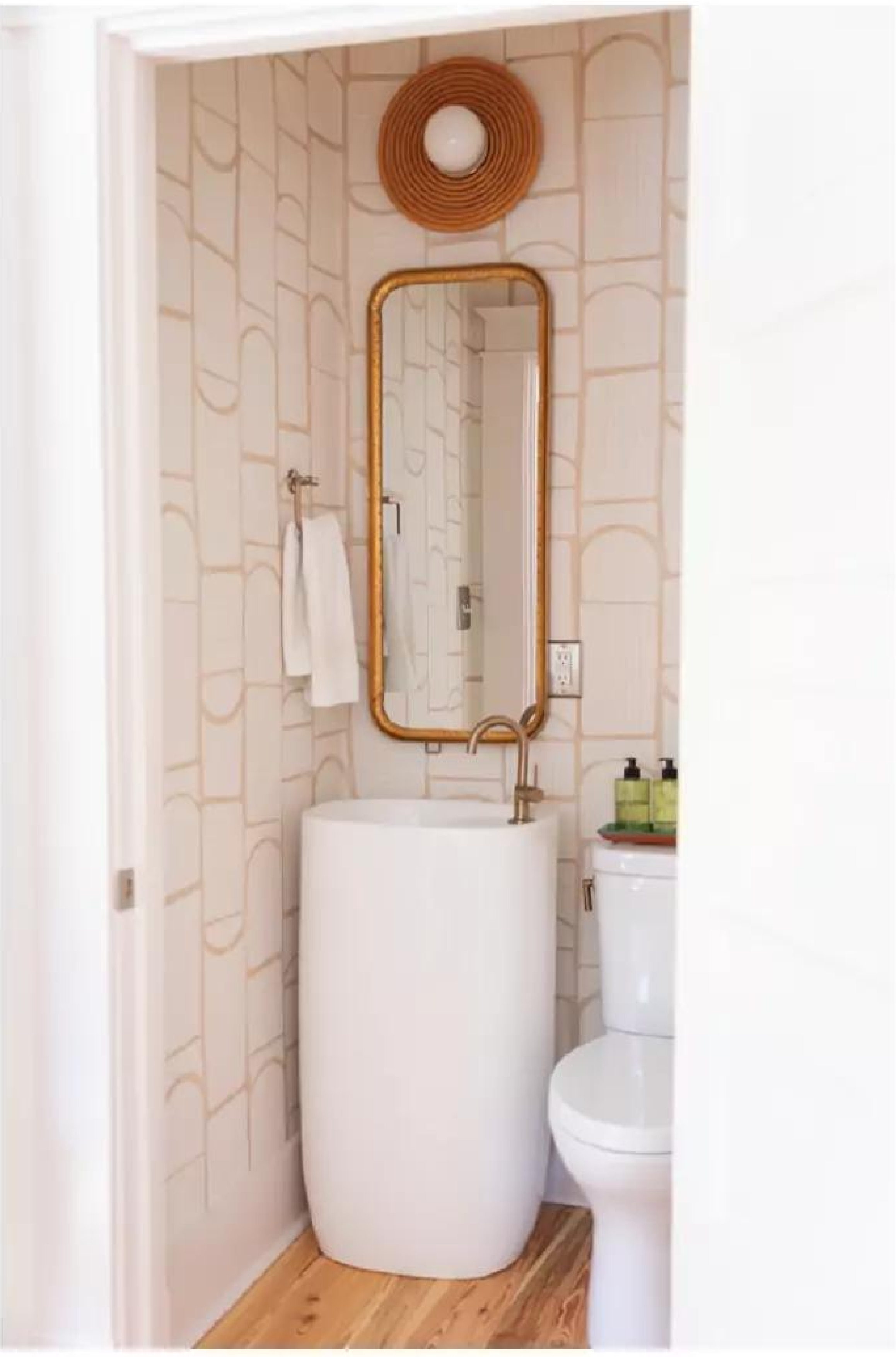
ALFRESCO HAVEN: The newly constructed screened porch features a Hudson Valley chandelier reminiscent of a floppy beach hat above a white concrete Made Goods table and synthetic wicker-on-teak chairs from Dovetail Furniture. The outdoor kitchen is topped with Michelangelo quartzite. A curved sectional in Sunbrella fabric wraps around a Four Hands wicker cocktail table, while a large fireplace provides a cozy outdoor space for the cooler months.

heart pine and white oak, added plaster surrounds on the fireplaces, and scaled the lighting to make each room feel warm and special. "We wanted every space to feel intentional," explains Price. "It's about balance—respecting the traditional while introducing contemporary touches."

While the house didn't require major structural changes, the team completely renovated the interior, refinishing and restoring the original white oak floors, redoing all the wall finishes, and replacing the lighting, fixtures, and equipment. They also remodeled the three bathrooms, repainted the exterior, and built new rear porches with custom double-fluted fireplaces. A favorite discovery came in the foyer, where multiple layers of paint were carefully removed to uncover striking heart pine wall paneling.

The kitchen underwent the biggest transformation. Designed for Danny, an avid cook, it features Wolf appliances, floor-to-ceiling cabinetry, and handmade Moroccan





SMALL WONDER: This snug powder room, tucked between the den and breakfast room, pops with tones of gold in the Jamie Young Co. mirror and Schumacher wallpaper. A whimsical Hudson Valley light fixture adds a playful touch.

> *"They have a cool aesthetic—clean, contemporary, cozy, and warm. We aimed to let the home guide the design while still introducing modern comforts and style."—Melissa Limehouse, interior designer*

tiles in soft yellows and browns that lend texture and warmth. A rounded plaster hood adds a sculptural touch that feels authentic to the home's age. The adjoining breakfast nook, outfitted with built-in seating and a lavender-gray wet bar, opens onto the new back porch—a seamless connection to the outdoors. "They have a cool aesthetic—clean, contemporary, cozy, and warm," says Limehouse. "We aimed to let the home guide the design while still introducing modern comforts and style."

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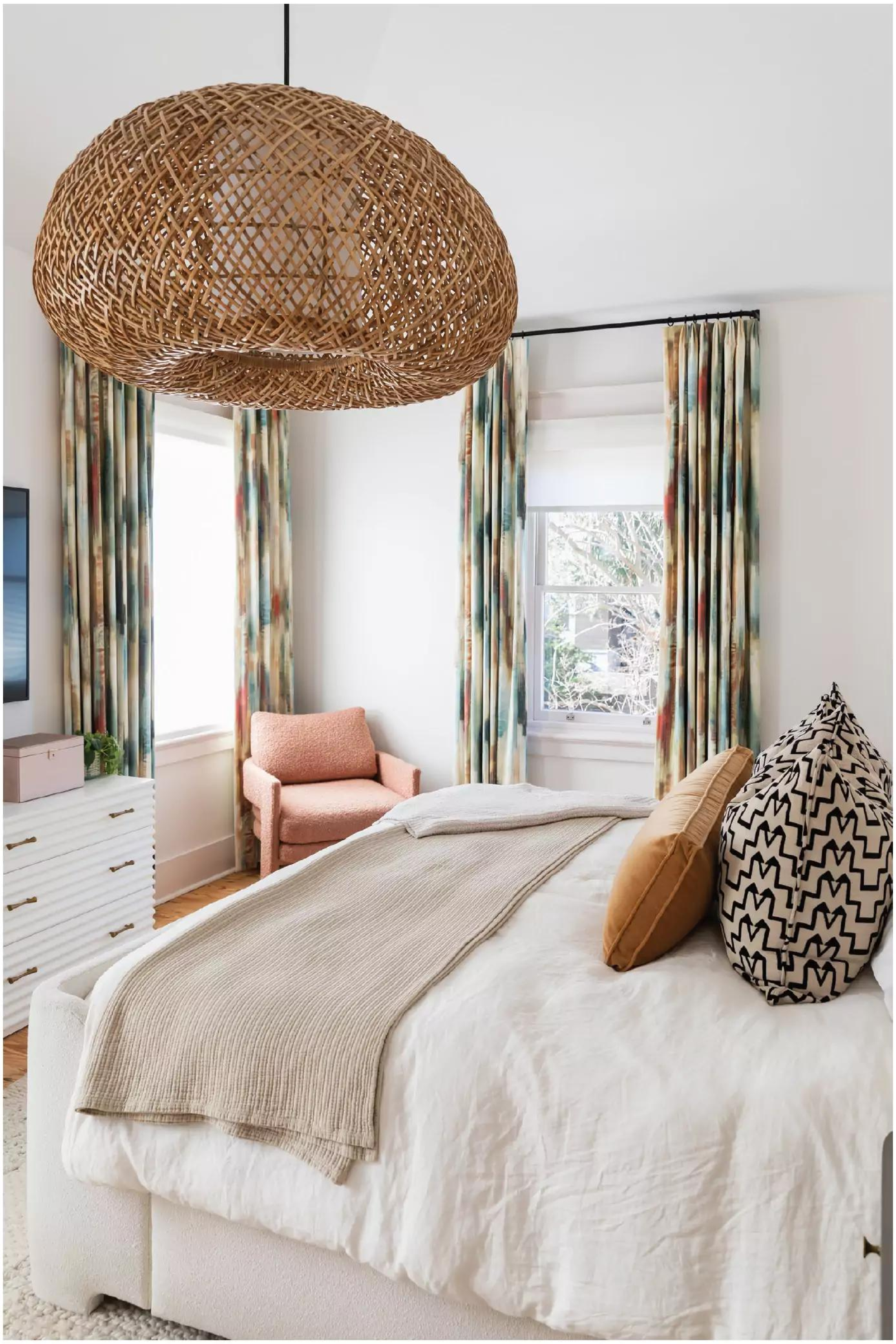
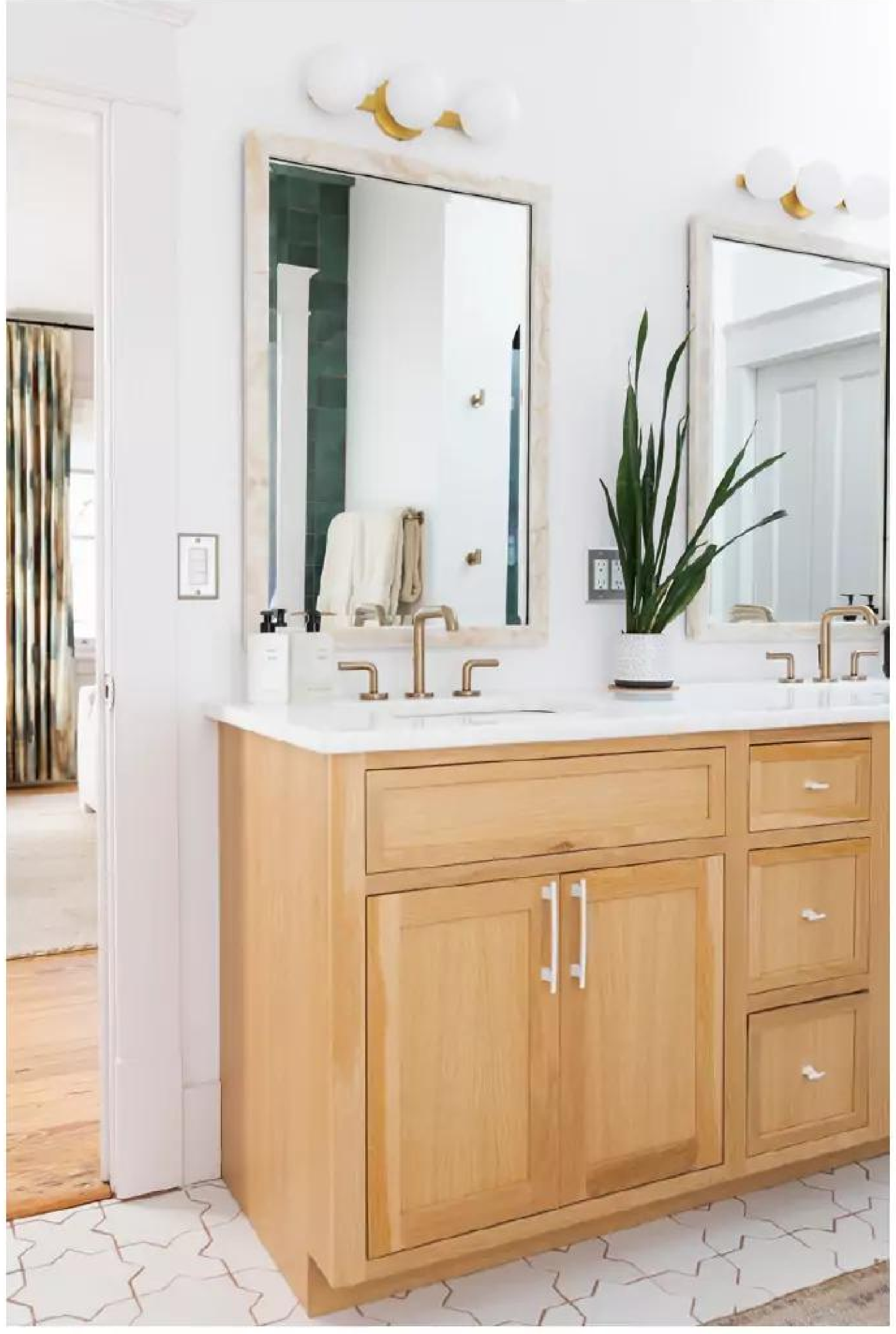
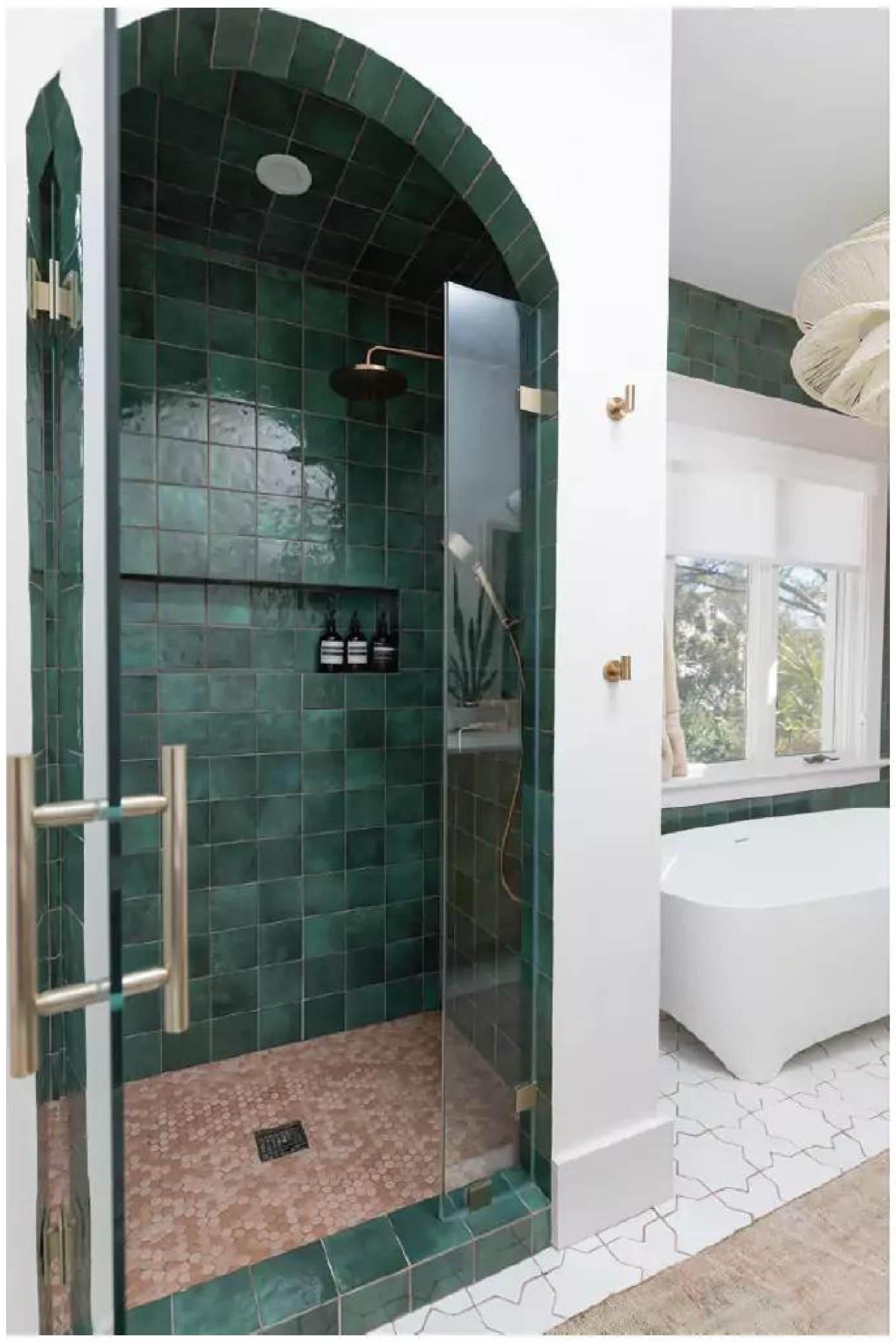




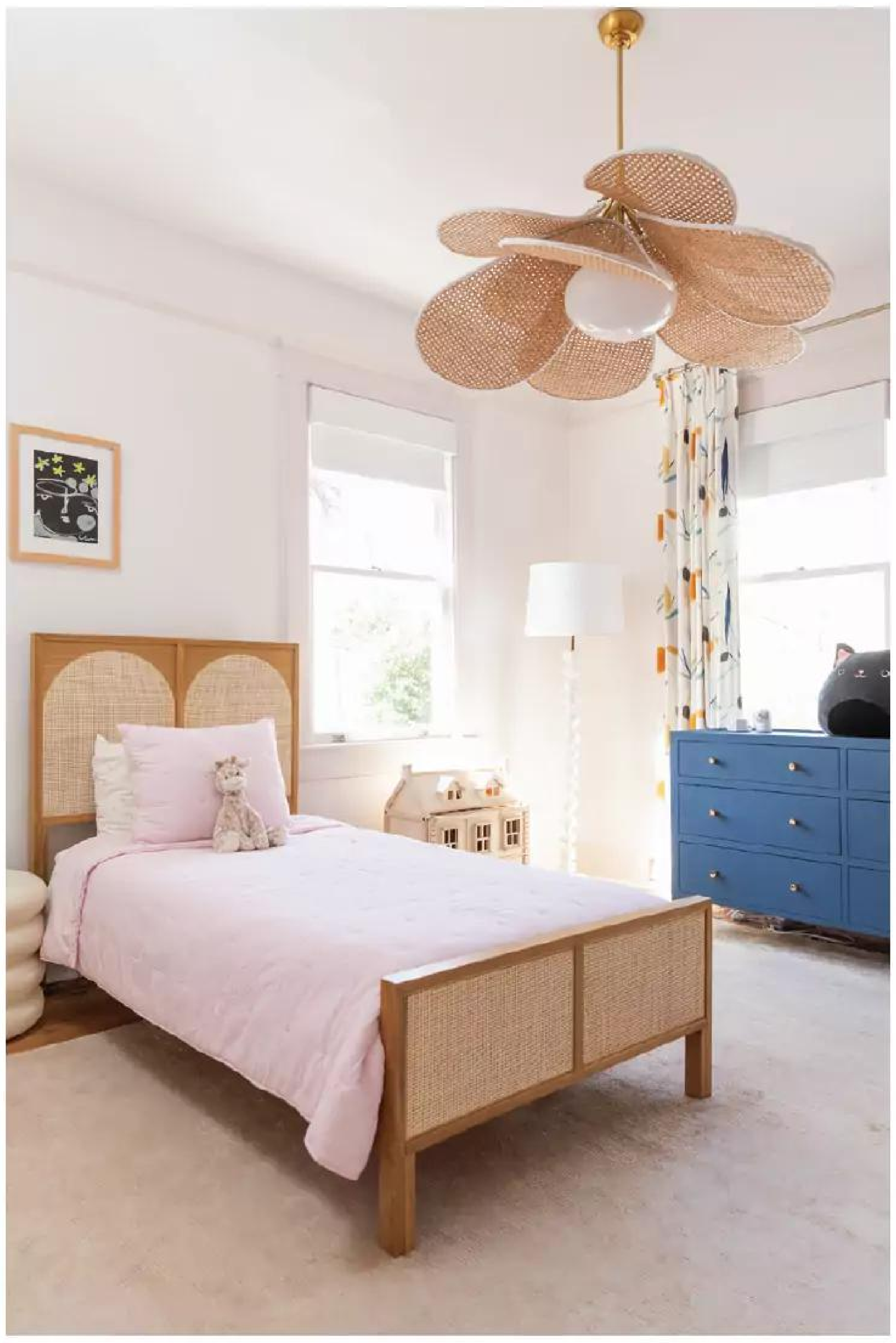


TEXTURED RETREAT: (Clockwise from above) The primary bedroom suite hosts a CR Laine fabric-wrapped bed and white lacquer dresser with aged brass hardware from Mr. Brown London. A sculptural Arteriors wicker light fixture grounds the vaulted ceilings. In the en-suite bathroom, glossy white star-and-cross tile with terracotta-toned grout highlights the wood tones of the white oak cabinets. Deep green tile in the shower and behind the freestanding Alfi bathtub adds depth and visual interest.

The result is a light-filled home where historic character meets understated elegance. The front rooms, airy and bright, feature white walls and the original oak floors punctuated by a Julian Chichester “Dakota” dining table with a bleached-oak top and blackened-brass, tulip-style base. In the den, a saffron velvet sofa glows against an historic William Morris floral wallpaper, creating a layered, tactile effect. Geometric marble tables and an amber glass pendant add modern counterpoints.

Upstairs, the white oak floors continue through three bedrooms and a shared bath with beadboard walls and an arched shower niche. The primary suite, added in 2007 when a porch was enclosed, has a distinctly modern aesthetic with its high ceilings and a large bathroom with a walk-in closet and soaking tub. The other spaces serve as Holland's room, a guest room for Grandma, and a home office where Danny's affinity for mid-century design shows through a Florence Knoll desk and Eames chair.

The expansive backyard, a rarity for most modest downtown homes, includes a newly constructed all-season porch with heaters, a fireplace, and an outdoor kitchen with green-veined marble countertops and cabinets painted in Sherwin-Williams "Marion Forest." The historically inspired color also appears



WOVEN WHIMSY: In Holland's bedroom, Hudson Valley's "Florina" caned-petal chandelier complements the wood-framed bed with caned panels from Four Hands. A royal blue faux linen dresser adds a cheerful pop of color.

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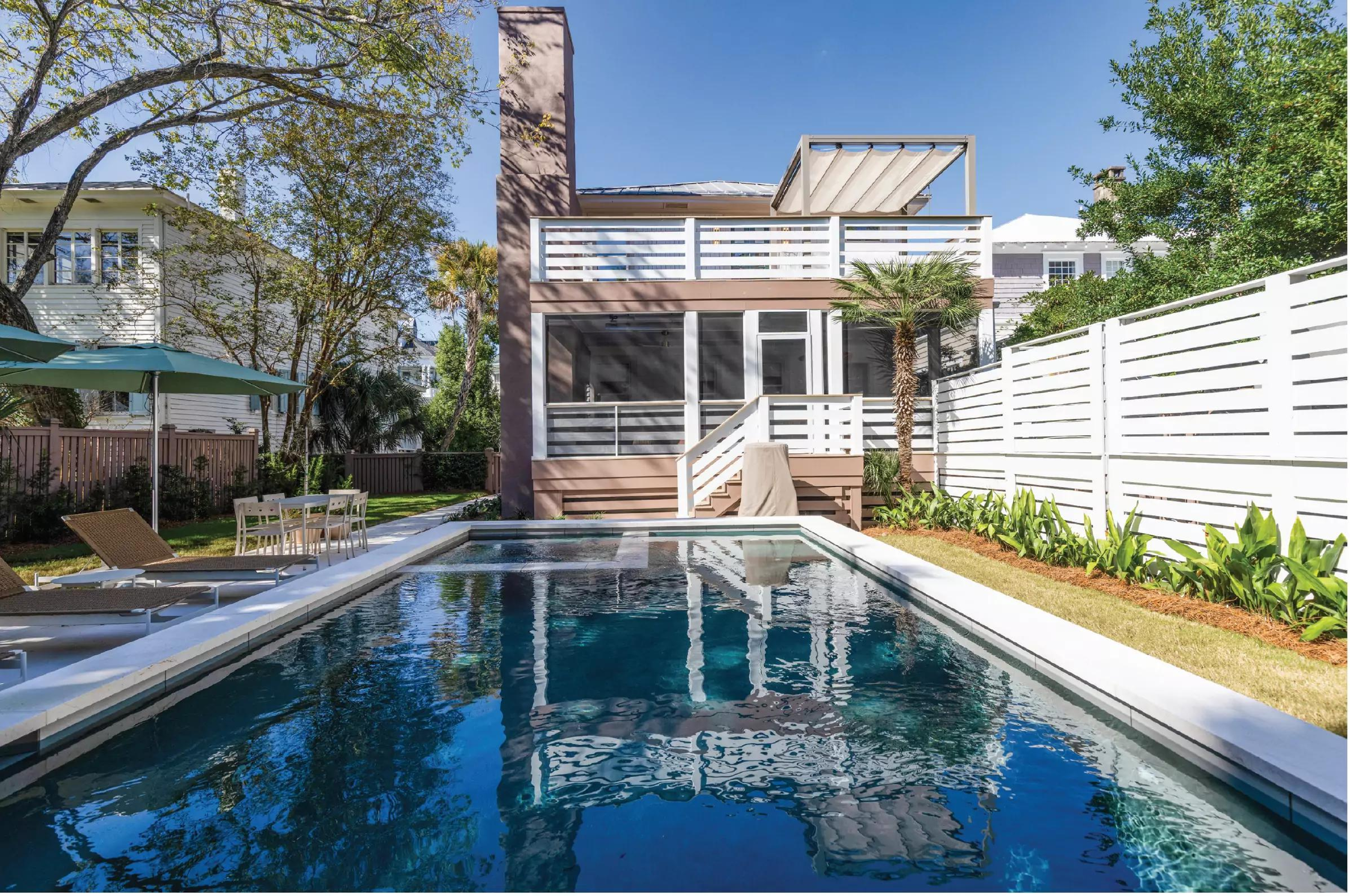

BACKYARD BLISS: The large backyard now accommodates a pool and a newly constructed two-story screened porch and sun deck. Built by Cannon Contracting, the structure features a cabana and dual fireplaces, providing the family with even more ways to enjoy the outdoors.

on the front door, paired with "Charleston White" and a peachy "Sarah Hopton Pearl" for the exterior paneling and trim. A pool and lawn create a private oasis for the family. Above, a second-story porch off the primary suite offers a private perch for morning coffee or evening unwinding.

For the Patersons, the house delivers exactly what they hoped for—a blend of function, family, and sense of place. "We're pretty simple with the phase of life that we're in—very block and tackle: get to school, horseback riding, ballet," says Danny, with a laugh. "The location and functionality are great."

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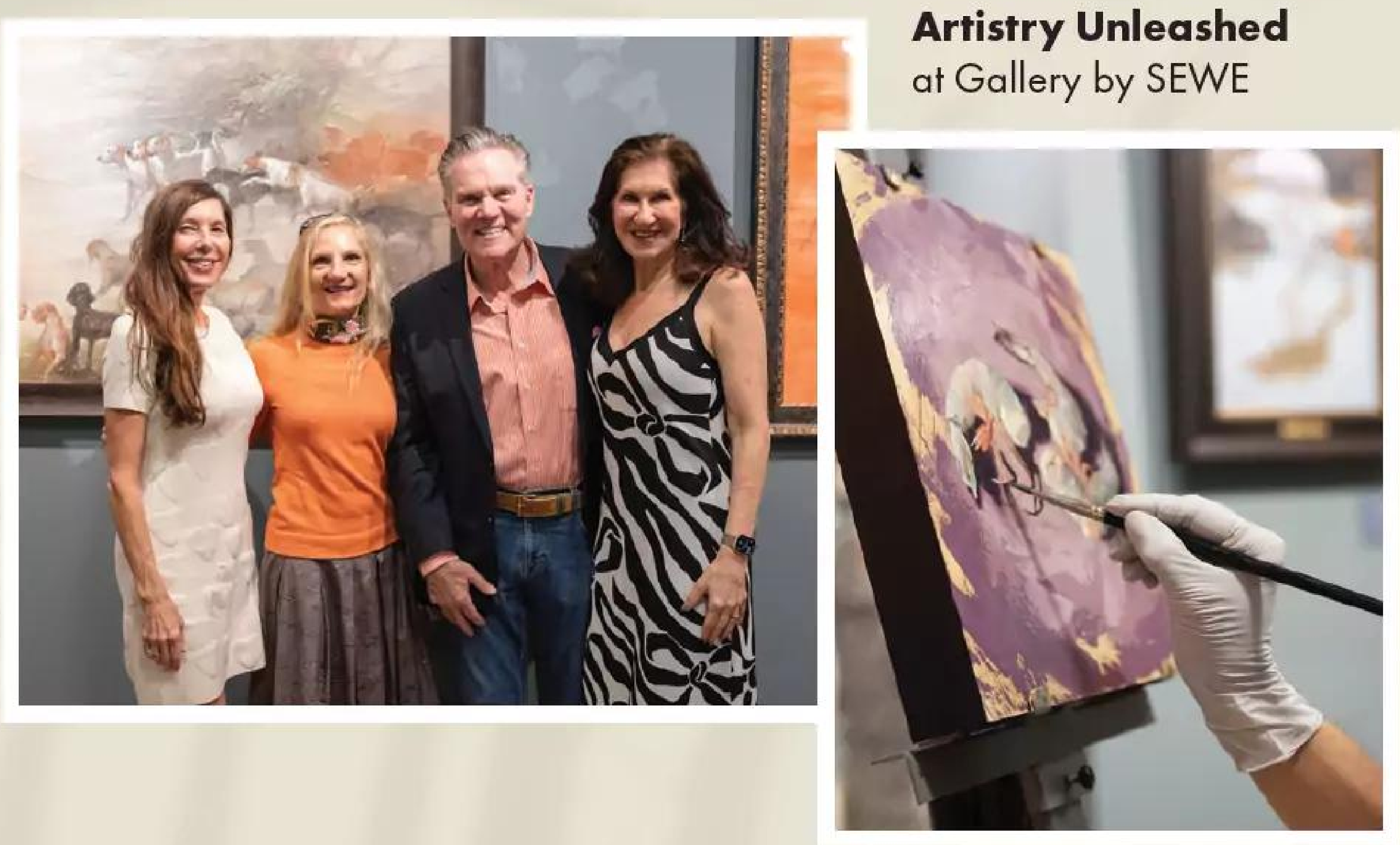

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at M. Dumas & Sons

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Pop-Up Shops

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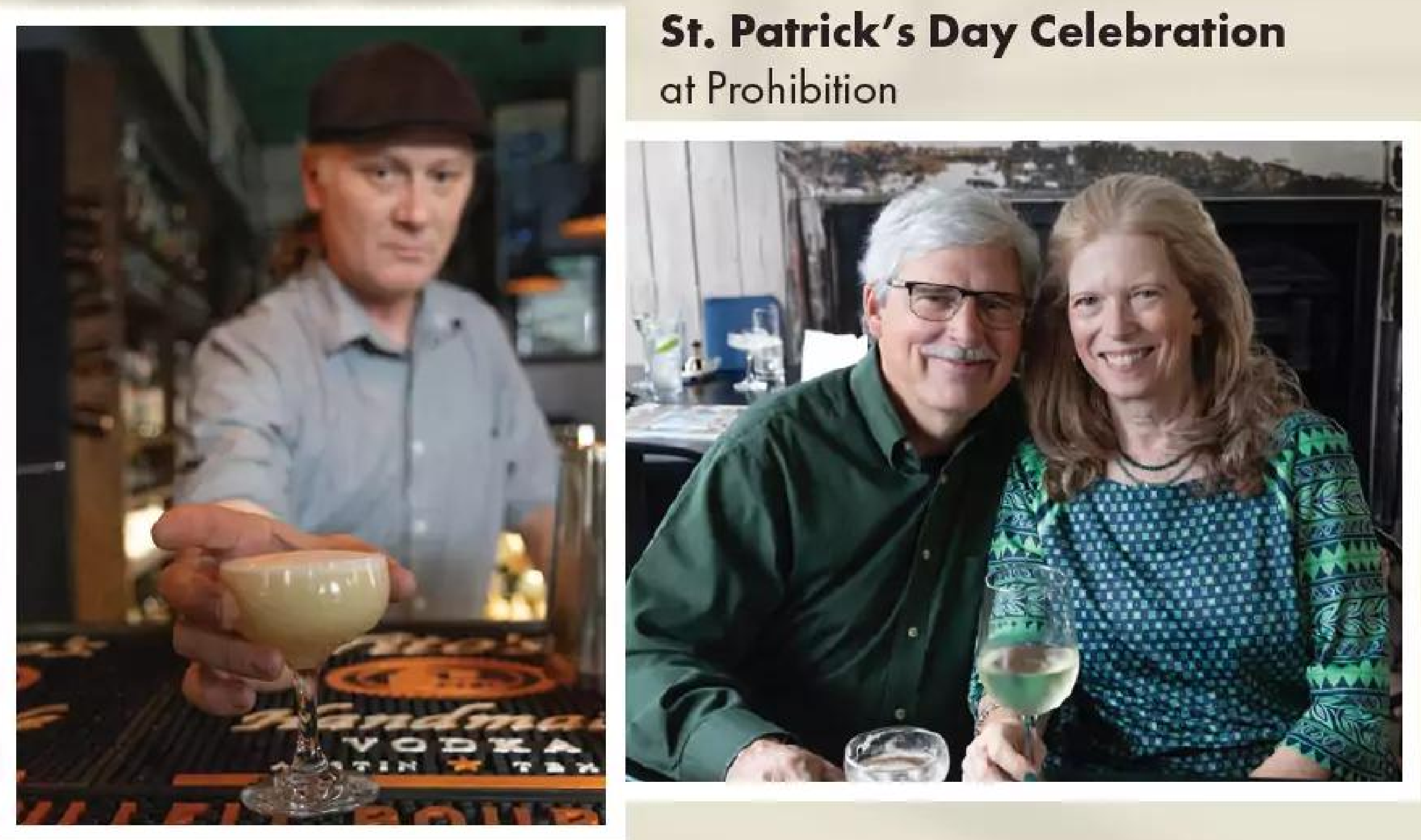

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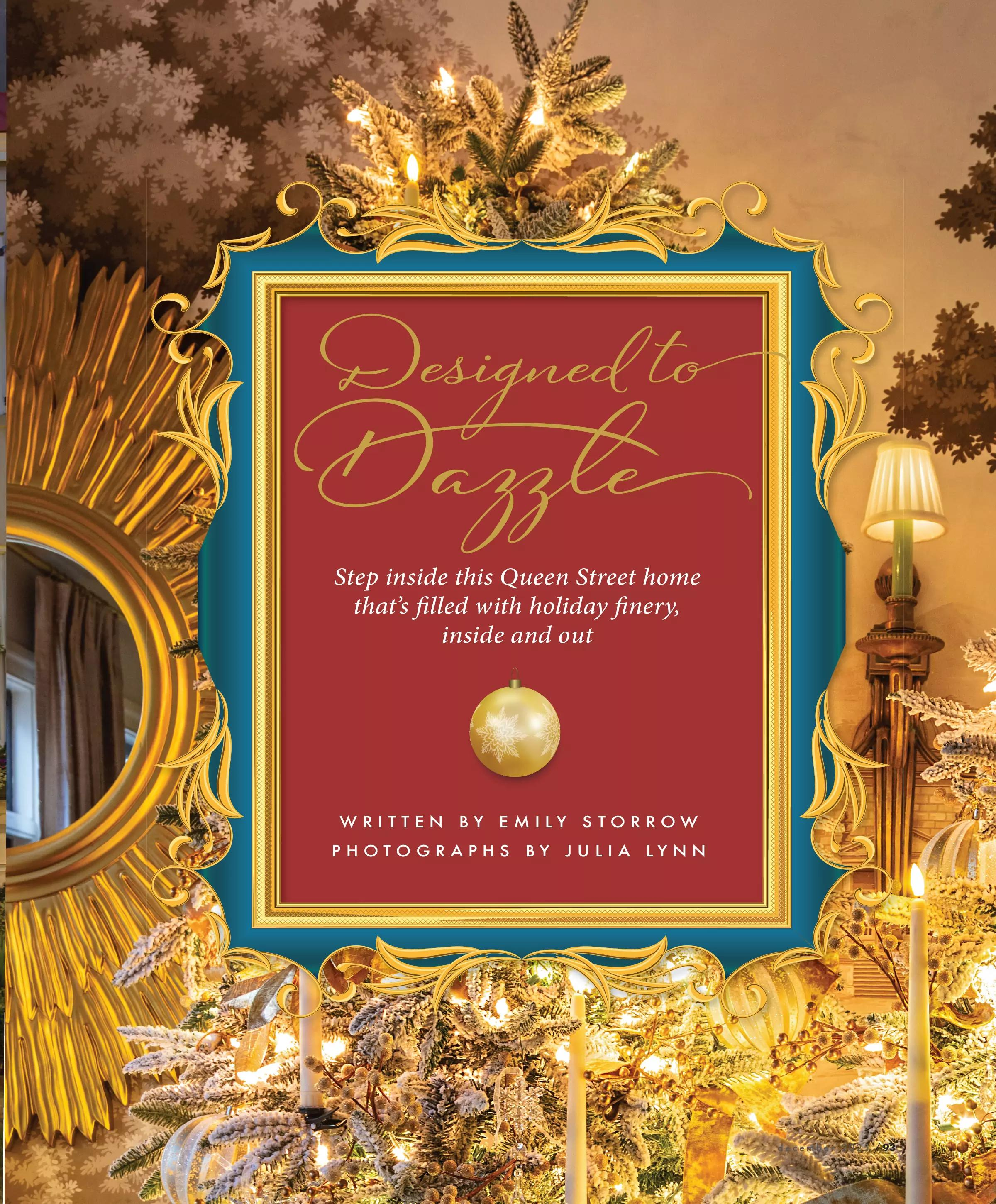


Designed to Dazzle

Step inside this Queen Street home that's filled with holiday finery, inside and out

WRITTEN BY EMILY STORROW
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JULIA LYNN

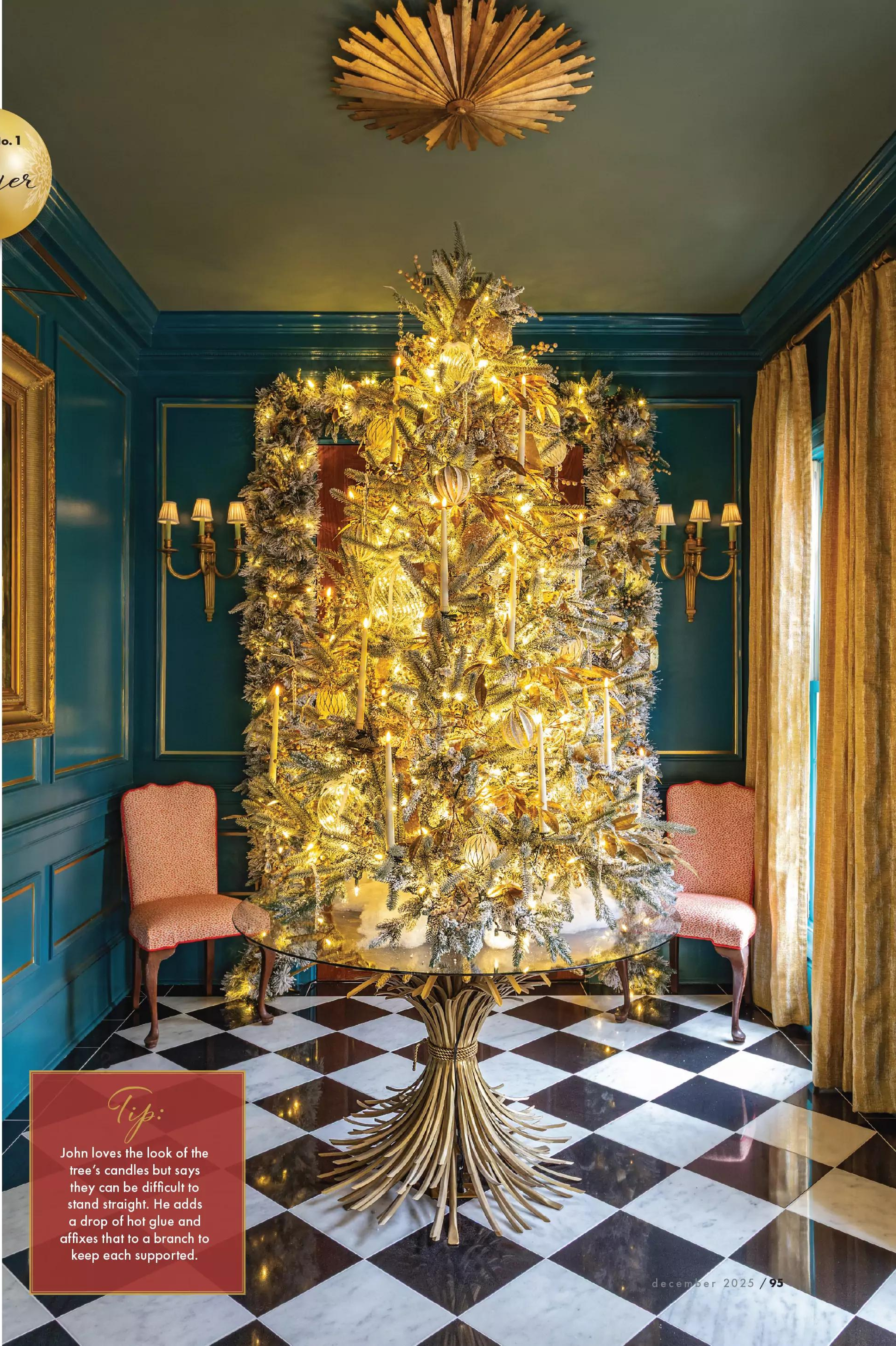
Warm Welcome: *John and Will Hardee; (below) a mélange of greenery, lights, pinecones, and ribbons spills down the staircase.*

Come Christmastime in Charleston, holiday partygoers don their most festive frocks—and the homes playing host to the merriment are no exception. Passersby ambling along Queen Street might pay particular mind to John and Will Hardee's handsome Charleston single, meticulously clad in wreaths and bows, winding garland, and dazzling string lights. And the eye-catching exterior is just the beginning. Inside, halls are decked with eight Christmas trees festooned by John, owner of design firm Kenric Hardee, to suit specific rooms of the home, from stately to nostalgic to downright opulent.

The delightful display is a well-planned one. Virtually all the greenery throughout the property is artificial—ensuring Charleston's mild holiday temps don't render outside decor dry and brittle, while also allowing the couple to make use of the fundamentals time and time again. For the rest of the year, it is all neatly packed into 40 carefully labeled bins and tucked beneath the house—where it eagerly awaits next season's return to the spotlight. Take a glimpse of the home's resplendent holiday decor and get John's expert tips for your own.

TREE No. 1
Foyer

All That Glitters: *Upon entry, guests pass beneath garland and are greeted with a petite flocked tree adorned with candles and elegant glass and gilded ornaments, all aglow against the foyer's walls painted in Sherwin-Williams "Port Royal" from the Colors of Historic Charleston collection.*



Tip:

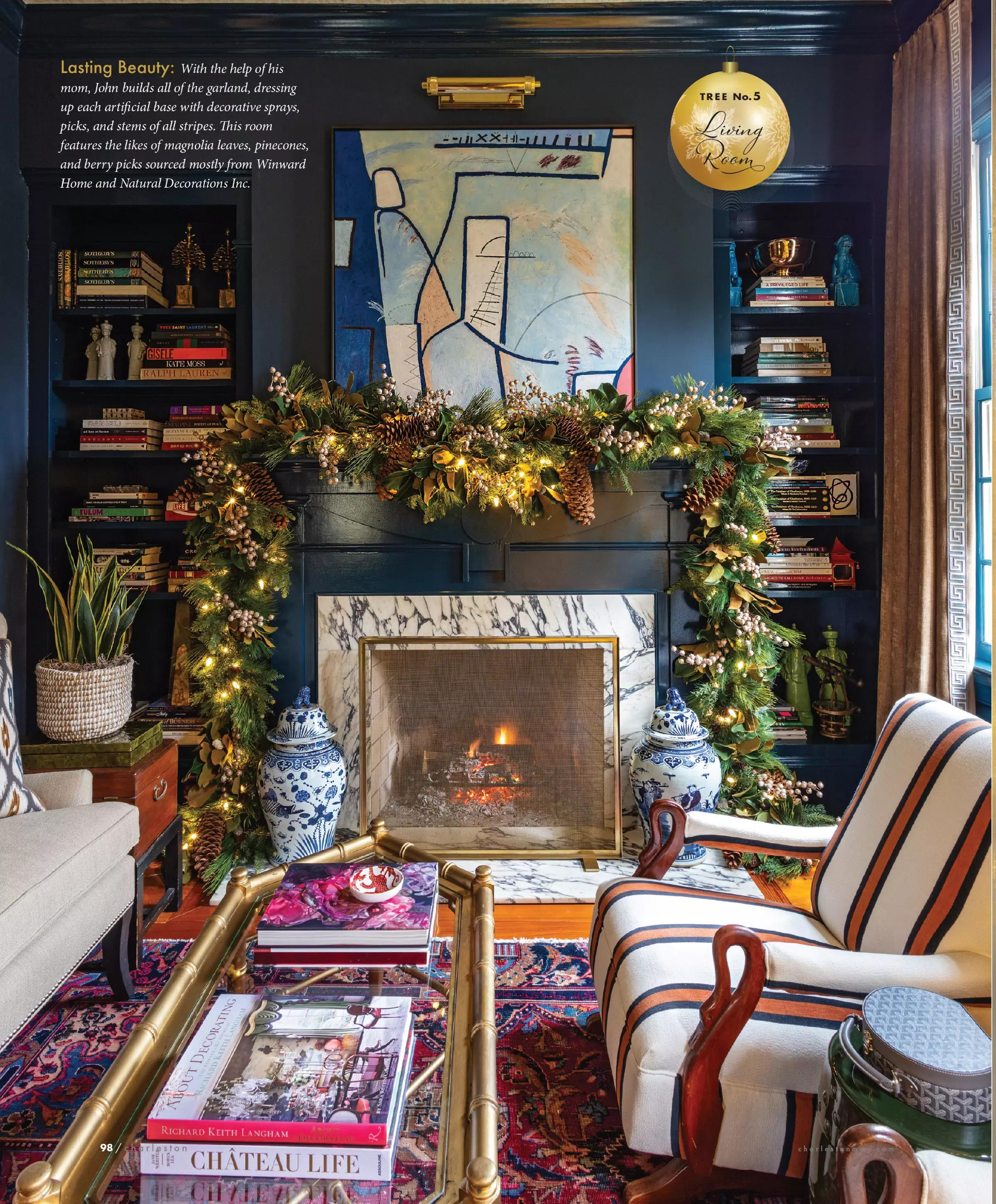
John loves the look of the tree's candles but says they can be difficult to stand straight. He adds a drop of hot glue and affixes that to a branch to keep each supported.

Tip: It's all about layering: For the dining room's winter wonderland, John adds dimension and volume to each tree and strand of garland through abundant candles, ornaments, and ribbon. But he also considers how complementary design elements—here, a collection of metallic tabletop trees, elegant potted paper-whites, and fluffy faux snow—will fully bring the space to life. After all, more is more during the holiday season.

> “Growing up, decorating for Christmas was a big deal to my family. This brings back memories of childhood—and just makes me happy.” —John Hardee

City of Light: *In November 2023, the couple was honeymooning at the Ritz Paris, where John fell for a grand flocked Christmas tree fitted with candles. “I was obsessed,” he says. He ordered this set from Balsam Hill as soon as they returned home.*

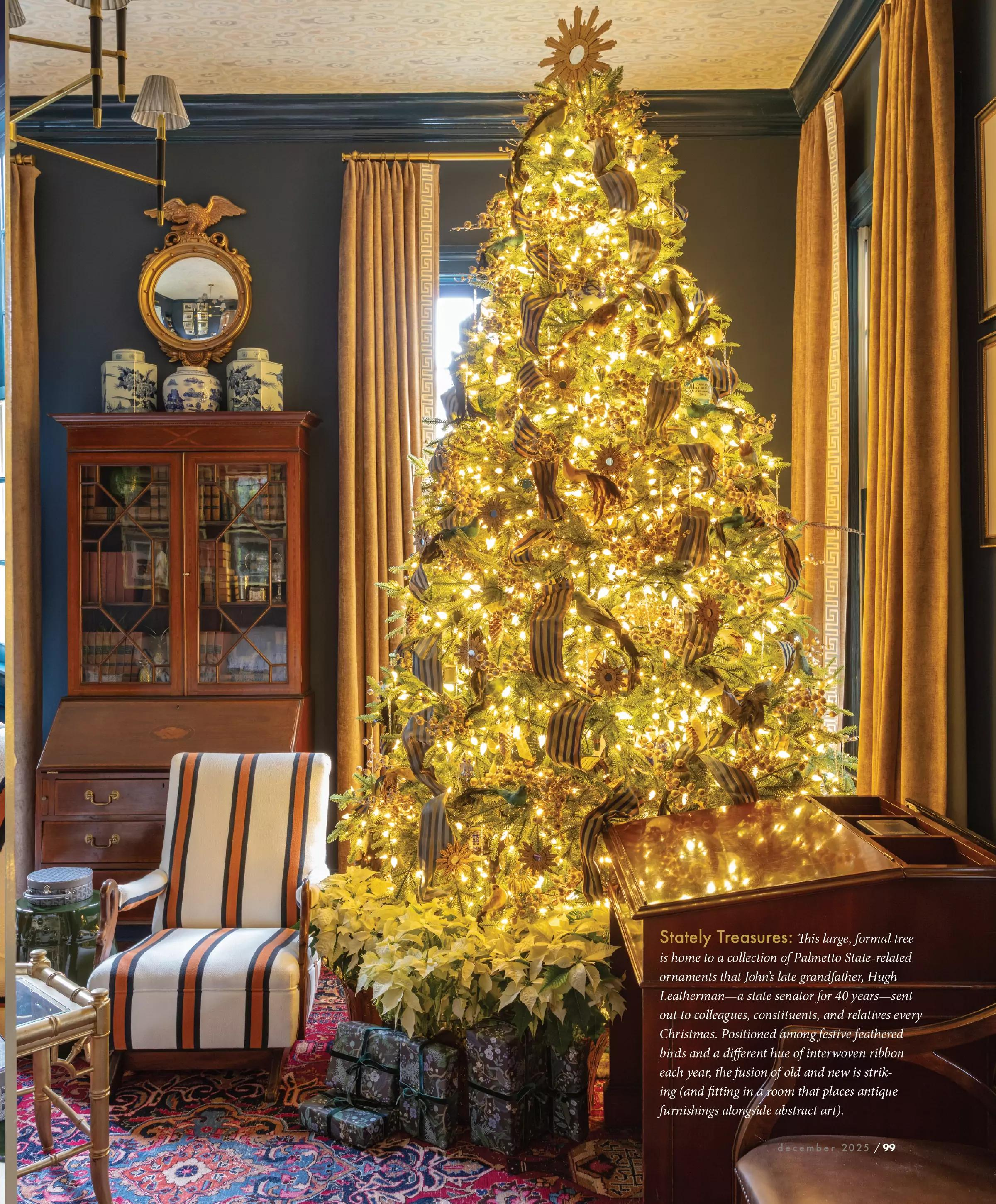
TREES 2, 3, & 4
Dining Room



Lasting Beauty: *With the help of his mom, John builds all of the garland, dressing up each artificial base with decorative sprays, picks, and stems of all stripes. This room features the likes of magnolia leaves, pinecones, and berry picks sourced mostly from Winward Home and Natural Decorations Inc.*

TREE No.5

Living Room



Stately Treasures: *This large, formal tree is home to a collection of Palmetto State-related ornaments that John's late grandfather, Hugh Leatherman—a state senator for 40 years—sent out to colleagues, constituents, and relatives every Christmas. Positioned among festive feathered birds and a different hue of interwoven ribbon each year, the fusion of old and new is striking (and fitting in a room that places antique furnishings alongside abstract art).*

TREE No. 6

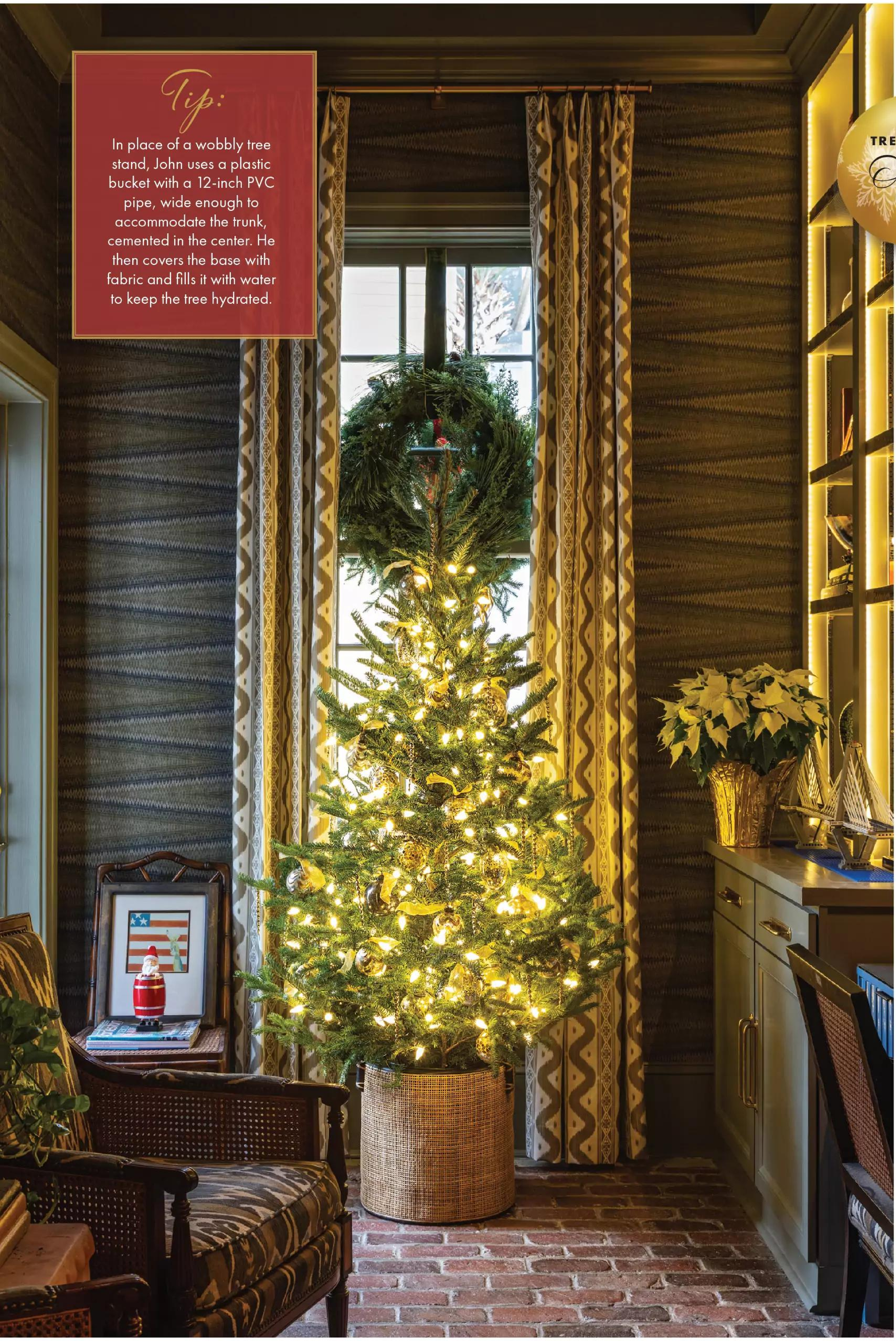
Pool House

EMPRESS 1908
INDIGO GIN
BULLEIT BOURBON
FRONTIER WHISKEY

Tip:

Camouflage the faux citrus picks by tucking them far back into the garland. John also adds clippings of real Fraser fir branches to give it a more realistic look and a wonderful scent.

Holiday Zest: *The garland stretching along the pool house's built-in wet bar features real trimmings for a whiff of fresh pine, while petite faux citrus inserts provide a pop of color. It's the perfect touch for the decidedly airy room, which serves as decor headquarters at the start of each season, when John stages long tables to build and bedeck the home's many garland displays. (Opposite) As the pool house has a more relaxed feel, John wanted its nine-foot tree to be a little more whimsical, draping it in a gold garland that reminds him of seaweed and adding decorative tassels from Samuel & Sons.*



Tip:

In place of a wobbly tree stand, John uses a plastic bucket with a 12-inch PVC pipe, wide enough to accommodate the trunk, cemented in the center. He then covers the base with fabric and fills it with water to keep the tree hydrated.

TREE No. 7

Office

Fraser Fresh: *In the office, a small fir is the only real tree in the house. (Opposite) In a cozy room off the kitchen, the "family" tree is a picture of nostalgia, featuring the couple's childhood ornaments and vintage GE String-A-Long Classic Lights, just like John grew up with. Having developed something of a cult following, the chunky, colorful lights can be tricky to track down—so when a strand burns out, John hand-glues each of the bulb covers atop a new set.* C

Web Extra!

Scan the code for more resources, an expanded photo gallery, and our April 2024 feature on the Hardees' house.

TREE No. 8

Den

MORE IS MORE
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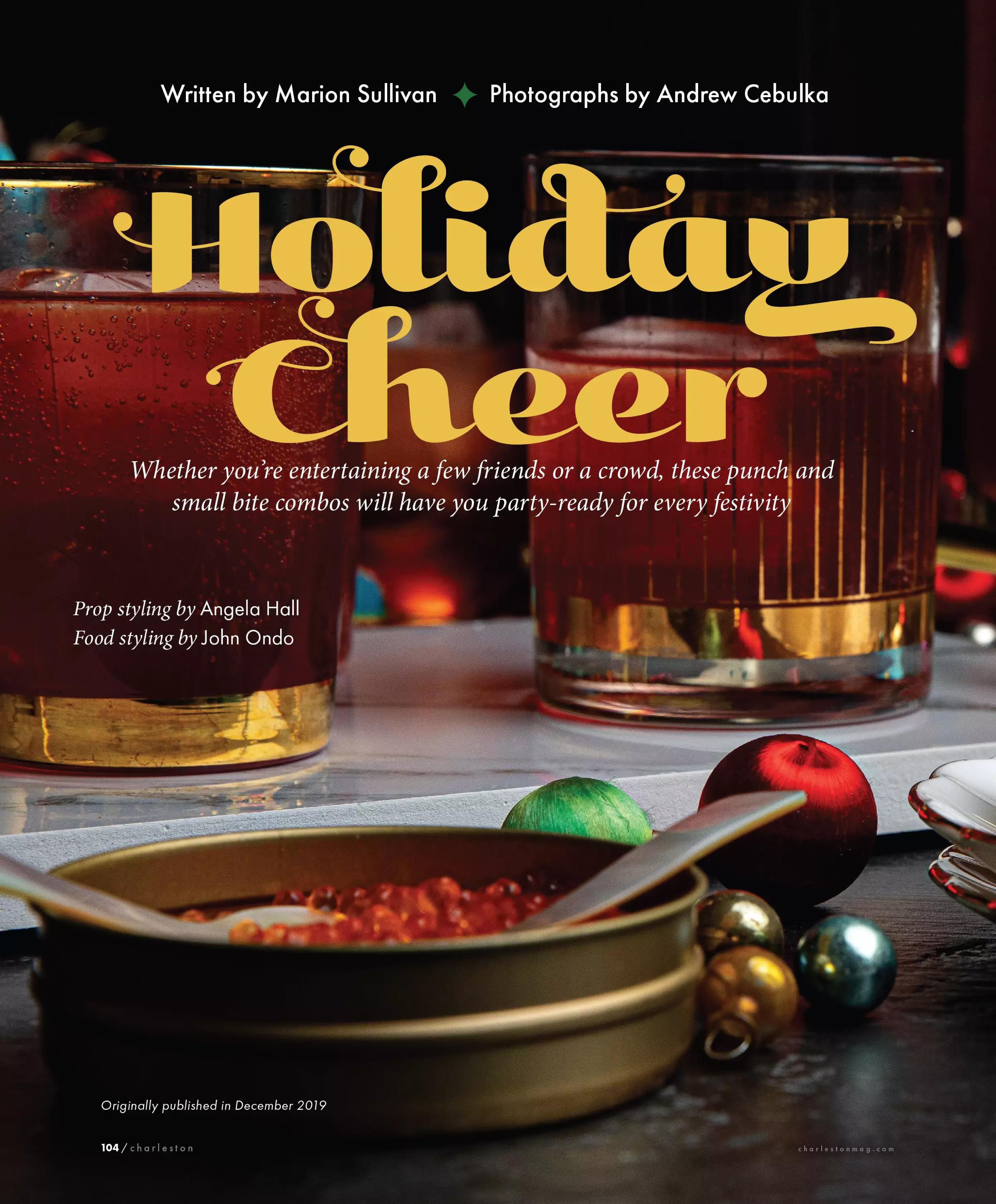
Written by Marion Sullivan ✦ Photographs by Andrew Cebulka

Holiday Cheer

Whether you're entertaining a few friends or a crowd, these punch and small bite combos will have you party-ready for every festivity



Prop styling by Angela Hall
Food styling by John Ondo

Originally published in December 2019

Edward Crouse and Marie Stitt, owners of the Babas on Cannon and Meeting cafés share their Campari punch and "fancy" eggs—a sophisticated take on Christmas cocktail party fare (see page 108).

"On Hanukkah, we celebrate the miracle that a one-day supply of oil burned for eight by preparing lots of fried foods, like these latkes, as well as jelly-stuffed donuts." —*Michael Shemtov*

Hanukkah

Mint Iced Tea & Potato & Zucchini Latkes & Caviar

Melody and Michael Shemtov of The Daily celebrate the Festival of Lights with a tea punch sans spirits and latkes made grand with caviar and seasoned crème fraîche

Mint Iced Tea

(Makes 12 four-oz. cups)

1 gal. water, divided
15 mint tea bags, Rishi Organic Green Tea Mint preferred
2 lemons, sliced
Optional additions while steeping:
fresh peppermint, cardamom, spearmint, lemongrass, or rosemary
1/4 cup to 1/2 cup wildflower honey
Springs of fresh mint for garnish

Bring two quarts of water to a boil in a large nonreactive pot. Once boiling, remove the pot from the heat and add the tea bags, slices from one of the lemons, and fresh herbs and spices, if using. Let steep for five minutes. Do not over-steep or you will extract bitter flavors from the tea and herbs.

Strain into a large container, making sure not to press down on the tea bags. Add two quarts of cold water to help prevent the tea from getting overly cloudy. Refrigerate.

Serve over an ice ring laced with fresh pomegranate seeds. (For suggested method, see page 108.) Garnish with slices from the second lemon and sprigs of fresh mint.

Potato & Zucchini Latkes with Apple Cider Crème Fraîche & Caviar

(Makes 20 latkes/Serves 8-10)

For the apple cider crème fraîche:

1½ cups (12 fl. oz.) crème fraîche
1/4 cup apple cider
1/4 cup minced chives

Combine all the ingredients in a mixing bowl and whisk to incorporate. Cover and refrigerate to firm up until ready to serve. Covered, it will keep in the refrigerator for two to three days.

For the potato & zucchini latkes:

1 lb. Yukon gold potatoes, peeled
1 lb. zucchini, ends trimmed
1/2 lb. sweet onion, such as Vidalia or yellow, peeled
1 Tbs. kosher salt
1 egg, lightly whisked
1/2 cup cornstarch
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
Vegetable or grapeseed oil
Flake salt
2 oz. jar of caviar
1/4 cup minced chives

Preheat the oven to 200°F. Line two rimmed baking sheets with paper towels.

Using the large-holed side of a box grater, grate the potatoes, zucchini, and onion into a medium bowl. Toss with the salt and let sit for 15 minutes. Take a bit of the mixture at a time and squeeze out as much water as possible. Place in a dry bowl and repeat with the rest of mixture.

Pour the egg over the vegetables and mix. Add the cornstarch, baking powder, and pepper and mix to combine.

Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat and add enough oil to cover the bottom of the skillet (about 1/4 cup). Working in batches, use a large tablespoon to scoop out the latke mix, about the size of a silver dollar. Slowly slide into the oil and flatten it with the back of a spoon. Continue to do this until the skillet is full but not overcrowded.

Cook the latkes on one side until browned and crispy, about three minutes. Carefully flip them over and cook until the other side is browned and crispy, another two to three minutes. Transfer the latkes from the skillet to the prepared baking sheets and place them in the oven to keep warm while cooking the rest.

Repeat with the remaining mixture, adding oil to the skillet if necessary. Sprinkle lightly with flake salt.

To serve:

Place a small dollop of the apple cider crème fraîche in the center of each latke. Using a plastic or other nonreactive spoon, place 1/4 teaspoon of caviar on top of each latke. Sprinkle with minced chives to garnish.

Christmas Eve

Campari Punch & Fancy Eggs

Edward Crouse and Marie Stitt of European-style cafés Babas on Cannon and Meeting serve up a refreshing, low-alcohol punch that's paired with a sophisticated protein—the perfect combo for guests heading to Midnight Mass

Campari Punch

(Makes 20 punch cup servings or 10 in ice-filled collins glasses)

Note: Make the orange oleo-saccharum at least 72 hours before making the punch.

3 cups (24 oz.) Campari
2 cups (16 oz.) cold or hot brewed then chilled Assam or other breakfast tea
3 cups (24 oz.) pomegranate juice
1½ cups (12 oz.) fresh lemon juice
1 cup (8 oz.) Demerara syrup (recipe follows)
1/2 cup (4 oz.) orange oleo-saccharum (recipe follows)
16 drops orange blossom water
5 cups (40 oz.) chilled club soda (or chilled champagne for a boozier option)

Combine all of the ingredients except the soda or champagne in a big container, cover, and refrigerate until cold. When it's time to serve, combine the mixture with the soda or champagne and serve over ice in cocktail glasses.

To serve in a punch bowl, use the biggest, fanciest ice you can muster, such as an ice ring. To make, fill a couple of Bundt pans with water and add your choice of sliced fruit, herbs, and pomegranate seeds. Place in the freezer until solid. Remove one from its pan and float it in the punch. When it melts and starts to look unappealing, switch it out with the second ring.

For the Demerara syrup:

3/4 cup Demerara sugar
2/3 cup boiling water

Combine and stir to mix well.

For the orange oleo-saccharum:

10 oranges, washed well
1 cup sugar

Use a vegetable peeler to remove the zest, but not the white pith, from the oranges. (Squeeze the peeled oranges and save the juice to drink by itself or in mimosas.) Put the zest and the sugar in a nonreactive bowl or jar and stir or shake to combine. Cover and leave on the counter. Give it a stir or shake whenever you think about it until the sugar is dissolved. This should take about 72 hours. (If some sugar granules remain, they'll dissolve in the finished drink.) Remove the peels and refrigerate the syrup for up to one week.

Babas Fancy Eggs

(Serves 10)

10 fresh farm eggs
2 yolks
2 tsp. Dijon mustard
2 Tbs. white wine vinegar
1/4 tsp. kosher salt
2¼ cups canola oil
4 oz. smoked trout roe

To soft boil the eggs:

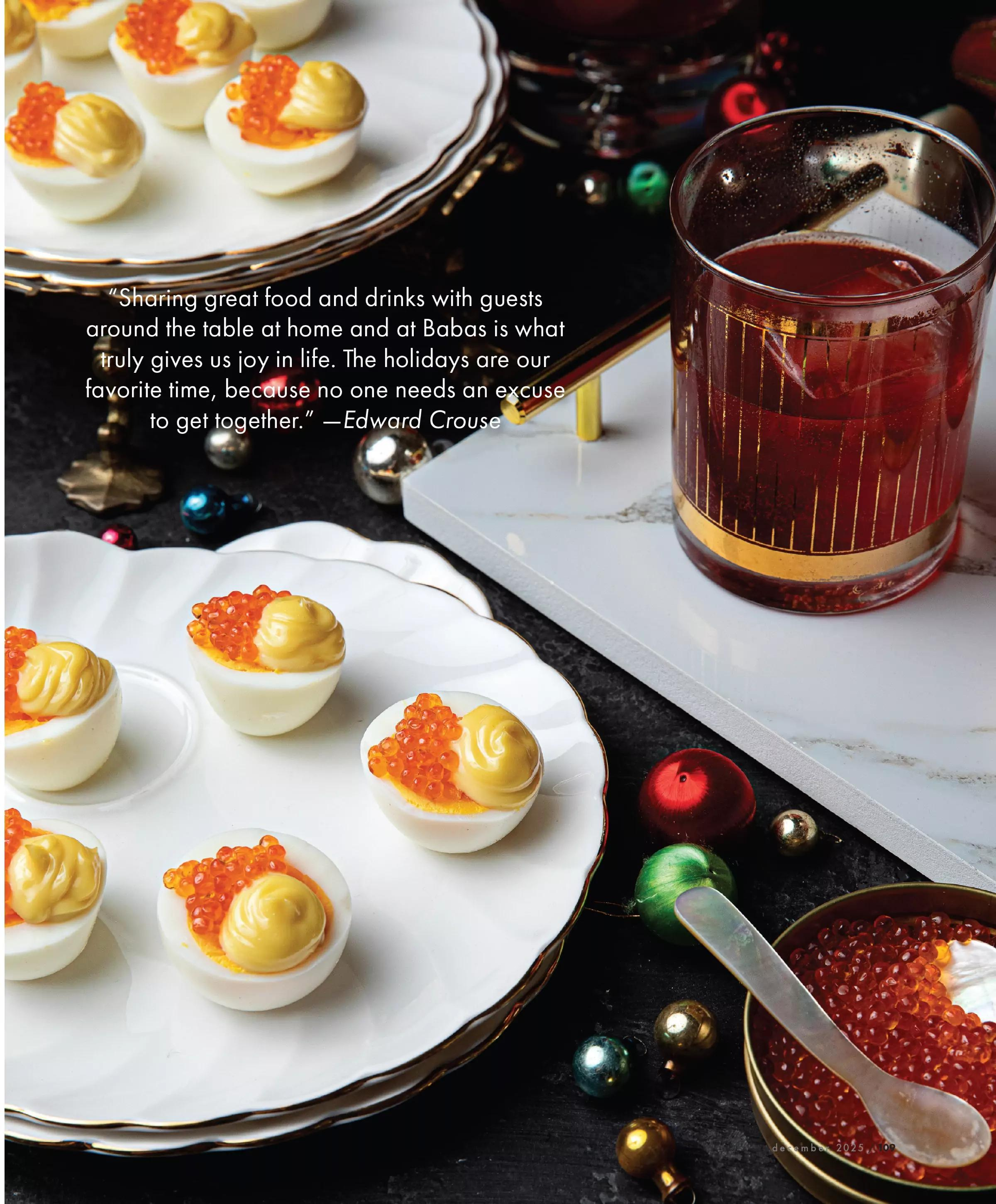
Let the eggs come to room temperature. Prick a hole in the larger end of each egg with a thumbtack or safety pin to make for easier peeling. Bring a heavy-bottomed six-quart or larger pot of water to a boil over medium-high heat. Add the eggs, reduce the heat to medium, and bring the water to a steady simmer. Cook the eggs for eight minutes. Transfer them to a bowl and run cold water over them until they are cool to the touch. Peel the eggs. Tightly covered, the peeled eggs can be stored in the refrigerator for up to two days.

To make the mayonnaise:

Combine the yolks, mustard, vinegar, and salt in a food processor or blender on low speed until all of the ingredients are combined, about 30 seconds. Increase the speed to medium and steadily pour a few drops of oil at a time into the mixture with the machine running. After 1/4 cup of the oil is incorporated, add the oil in a steady thin stream until all is incorporated. Refrigerate.

To serve:

Cut 1/16th inch off of the top and bottom of the eggs so when cut in half they won't fall over. Using a very clean paring knife, cut each egg in half laterally (not lengthwise), which provides for a clean and symmetric plating. Using a spoon or piping bag, place a teaspoon-sized dot of the mayonnaise mixture on each egg, slightly off center so the yolk is still visible. Using a plastic or other nonreactive spoon, mound about a teaspoon of roe next to the mayonnaise. Arrange the eggs on a plate or platter and serve immediately.



> “Sharing great food and drinks with guests around the table at home and at Babas is what truly gives us joy in life. The holidays are our favorite time, because no one needs an excuse to get together.” —*Edward Crouse*

“We traditionally make a big batch of my husband John’s eggnog. It keeps the party going as we’re never without friends, family, and neighbors popping in for some holiday cheer.”
—*Carrie Morey*

Christmas Brunch

Eggnog-topped Irish Coffee & Callie's Cinnamon Stickies

Carrie Morey of Callie's Hot Little Biscuit always serves her husband John's decadent eggnog on Christmas Eve, making sure there's plenty to top Irish coffee for Christmas brunch, accompanied by her scrumptious stickies

Eggnog-topped Irish Coffee

(Makes 4-6 servings)

1 qt. water
4-5 Tbs. dark roast coffee beans
Pinch kosher salt
Premium Irish whiskey, Redbreast preferred
John's Eggnog (recipe follows)
Ground cinnamon

Bring the water to a boil. Grind the coffee beans and place in a French press. Add the salt. Pour in the boiling water and brew for four minutes. Gently push down on the plunger until it reaches the bottom of the vessel. Pour into mugs and add one jigger of whiskey per cup of coffee. Top the coffee with a generous dollop of eggnog and a dusting of cinnamon.

John's Eggnog

(Makes 12-14 servings)

12 egg yolks
1 cup sugar, divided
1/4 tsp. kosher salt
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp. allspice
12 egg whites
1 cup whole milk
1 cup whipping cream
1 cup bourbon
1 cup rum

Whisk the yolks, 1/2 cup of the sugar, the salt, vanilla, cinnamon, and allspice in a large bowl. Using a stand mixer or handheld mixer, beat the egg whites on medium-high speed while gradually adding the remaining 1/2 cup of sugar. Continue to beat until stiff peaks form, which will take a couple of minutes. Gently fold the egg white mixture into the egg yolk mixture until combined. Slowly add in the milk, cream, bourbon, and rum and stir until well combined. Chill. Stir again before serving.

Callie's Cinnamon Stickies

(Makes 10-12 stickies)

For the topping:

1 cup chopped pecans
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1/3 cup light brown sugar, packed
1 Tbs. ground cinnamon

Combine all of the ingredients and set aside.

For the stickies:

2 cups self-rising flour, White Lily preferred, plus more for dusting
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1/3 cup packed light brown sugar
14 Tbs. (1¾ sticks) butter, divided: 8 Tbs. cut into cubes and kept at room temperature and 6 Tbs. melted
1/4 cup (2 oz.) cream cheese, brought to room temperature
3/4 cup whole buttermilk, plus 1 Tbs. if needed (may substitute low-fat)

Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper and flour the paper generously.

Place two cups of flour in a large bowl. Mix in the two sugars. Incorporate the cubed butter and then the cream cheese into the flour, using your fingers to "cut in" the butter and cream cheese until mixture resembles chunky cottage cheese.

Make a well in the center. Pour in the buttermilk and, using your hands or a small rubber spatula, mix the flour into the buttermilk. The dough will be wet and messy.

Sprinkle flour on the dough and turn the dough out onto the prepared baking sheet. Press into a rectangle. Flour the top generously and roll out into a 1/4-inch-thick rectangle. Use a pastry brush to remove excess flour from the top of the dough. Then brush the top with four tablespoons of the melted butter. Sprinkle two-thirds of the topping over the dough.

With well-floured hands and working from the long side, use the parchment paper to lift and roll the dough into a log. Smooth the dough, and freeze it for 45 minutes on the baking sheet.

While the log is freezing, preheat the oven to 500°F. Line another rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.

Trim the ends of the log and cut it into 1/2-inch-thick slices using a serrated knife. (Flouring the knife will help keep the dough from sticking.) Lay the slices on the prepared baking sheet. Brush them with the remaining two tablespoons of melted butter and sprinkle with the remaining third of the topping.

Place the stickies in the oven and immediately reduce the temperature to 400°F. Bake for 16 to 18 minutes, rotating the pan once, until golden brown. Serve warm.

You can make, shape, cut, and top the stickies the night before and refrigerate them to bake in the morning.

New Year's Eve

St. Cecilia Society Punch & Cheese Straws

Brothers and cookbook authors Matt Lee and Ted Lee deliver old Charleston hospitality with this venerable punch—a mildly potent tipple of brandy, rum, tea, and bubbles—along with an ever-popular nibble

St. Cecilia Society Punch

(Makes 3½ quarts, enough for 10 people to have two drinks)

- *2 tsp. grated peeled fresh ginger (about one two-inch-long piece)*
- *2 lemons, ends trimmed, thinly sliced*
- *3 ripe peaches, skins on, sliced 1/4-inch thick or 15 oz. can Del Monte peaches in syrup, drained and sliced 1/4-inch thick*
- *3 cups brandy*
- *3/4 cup dark rum, such as Mount Gay or Barbancourt*
- *1 small ripe pineapple (about 3 to 3½ lbs.)*
- *3 cups cold, strongly brewed sweet tea (recipe follows)*
- *1 bottle chilled champagne or sparkling wine*
- *1 qt. chilled seltzer water or club soda*
- *1 round block of ice, made by freezing water in a 4½-cup ring mold or a 6-cup bowl*

Wrap the ginger in a piece of cheesecloth or a strong paper towel folded like an envelope and seal with string or a large paper clip. Place it with the lemons and peaches at the bottom of a two-quart bowl. Pour the brandy and rum into the bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and steep in the refrigerator for at least two hours, twice that if possible.

When ready to serve, discard the ginger and peaches and transfer the lemons, brandy, and rum mixture to a six-quart punch bowl.

With a sharp knife, trim the ends of the pineapple, carefully slice off the rind, and cut it in half lengthwise. Cut the core out of each side, slice each half crosswise into 1/4-inch-thick half moons, and add them to the bowl. Pour the chilled sweet iced tea, champagne, and seltzer into the bowl and float the ice ring in the punch. Ladle into punch glasses or teacups and serve.

For the sweet tea:

(Makes about 1½ quarts)

- *6 cups (1½ qts.) cold water, divided, plus more to taste*
- *6 bags orange pekoe tea or 2 rounded Tbs. loose black tea, such as Lipton*
- *1/2 cup sugar*

Pour three cups of the water into a kettle and bring to a boil over high heat.

Strip the paper tags from the tea bags, gather the strings together, and knot them around the handle of a ladle or long-handled spoon. Place the ladle and bags in a heatproof two-quart pitcher (if using loose tea, simply put the tea in the pitcher). Pour the hot water into the pitcher and let steep 10 minutes.

Remove the tea bags (don't squeeze them!) or if using loose tea, pass the concentrate through a strainer into another vessel and return the tea to the pitcher (discard the leaves). Add the sugar and stir to dissolve. Pour in the remaining three cups of water, or more to taste. Let cool completely, about 30 minutes, then transfer to the refrigerator to chill.

Cheese Straws

(Makes 30 straws)

- *1½ cups (about 4 oz.) grated extra-sharp cheddar cheese*
- *4 Tbs. unsalted butter, softened and cut into four pieces*
- *3/4 cup all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting*
- *1/2 tsp. kosher salt*
- *1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes*
- *1 Tbs. half-and-half*

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Combine the cheese, butter, flour, salt, and red pepper flakes in a food processor and process in five, five-second pulses until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add the half-and-half and process until the dough forms a ball, about 10 seconds.

On a lightly floured surface, using a lightly floured rolling pin, roll the dough into an 8-by-10-inch rectangle that is 1/8-inch thick. With a sharp knife or pizza cutter, cut the dough into long, thin strips, 1/4- to 1/3-inch wide. (Dipping the knife or pizza cutter in flour after every few inches ensures a clean cut.)

Gently transfer the strips to an ungreased baking sheet, leaving at least 1/4 inch between them. The dough will sag and may break in the transfer, but don't be concerned—just do your best. The straws can be any length, from two to 10 inches.

Bake the straws on the middle rack for 12 to 15 minutes, or until the ends are barely browned. Remove from the oven and set the baking sheet on a wire rack to cool. Serve at room temperature. In a sealed container, the cheese straws will keep in the refrigerator for two days.

"St. Cecilia punch and cheese straws with a spicy kick are our go-to cocktail hour holiday fare. We make sure to place them front and center so they're visible as soon as guests step in the door."—*Ted Lee*

> “These Hoppin’ John cakes are a fun way of continuing this New Year’s Day tradition. Topping them with collard greens brings it all together.”
> —*Kevin Mitchell*

Web Extra!
Scan the code for more holiday recipes from our archives.

New Year's Brunch

Bloody Marys & Hoppin' John Cakes with Spicy Collards

Culinary Institute of Charleston instructor and culinary historian Kevin Mitchell presents the holiday's traditional dishes for good luck and prosperity in a flavorful cake topped with collards

Bloody Marys

(MAKES 8 DRINKS)

4 cups chilled tomato juice or V8
1 cup chilled quality vodka, Dixie Black Pepper Vodka preferred
1 cup chilled sherry vinegar
1 rib celery, peeled
1 shallot, cut in half
1 tsp. fennel seeds
1 tsp. smoked paprika
1 tsp. hot sauce, Tabasco preferred
Juice of 1/2 lemon
1 Tbs. kosher salt
Bulls Bay Red Mash Sea Salt to garnish rim of glass, optional
Pickled okra and shrimp for garnish

Combine the tomato juice, vodka, vinegar, celery, shallot, fennel seeds, paprika, hot sauce, lemon juice, and salt in a blender and blend until completely smooth.

To rim the glasses with the Bulls Bay salt, rub the outer rim with a cut lemon. Place the salt on a small plate. Tip the wet outer rim of the glass into the salt at about a 45-degree angle, making sure not to get the salt inside the glass. Let dry for a couple of minutes before adding the ice and bloody mary mix. Garnish with the shrimp and okra.

Hoppin' John Cakes with Spicy Collards

(MAKES 10 FOUR-OZ. CAKES)

1 Tbs. vegetable oil, plus more for frying
4 oz. bacon, chopped
1½ cups minced onion
1 cup peeled and minced celery
1 cup Arborio rice
3 cups chicken or vegetable stock
1½ cups cooked black-eyed peas
1 Tbs. chopped fresh thyme
1 Tbs. chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 dashes Tabasco sauce
2 cups all-purpose flour
5 eggs, beaten
3 cups panko bread crumbs
2 Tbs. kosher salt, plus more for seasoning
1 Tbs. black pepper, plus more for seasoning
3 Tbs. water
1/2 cup benne seeds
Spicy collards (recipe follows)
1 cup diced red bell peppers for garnish

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the bacon and cook until the fat has rendered and the bacon has browned, about five minutes. Add the onion and cook, stirring frequently, until softened, about five minutes. Add the celery and cook, stirring frequently, for an additional three minutes. Stir in the rice and cook until the grains become translucent, about two minutes.

Add the stock a half a cup at a time and cook, stirring frequently, until all of the liquid is absorbed and rice is just al dente, 15 to 20 minutes. Stir in the peas and cook for five minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Spread the mixture onto a rimmed baking sheet and refrigerate.

Once chilled, add the thyme, parsley, and Tabasco and combine well. Divide the mixture into 10 balls and pat into cakes. Place on a rimmed baking sheet lined with parchment paper and refrigerate for 10 minutes.

Place the flour, eggs, and panko in three separate shallow dishes. Combine two tablespoons of salt and one tablespoon of black pepper with the flour and mix well. Whisk the water into the eggs. Add the benne seeds to the panko and mix well. Dredge the cakes in the flour. Tap off any excess, then dredge them in the egg wash. Shake off any excess and roll in the panko mixture. Place them on the parchment paper-lined baking sheet and freeze for 20 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 200°F. Line another rimmed baking sheet with paper towels.

Put approximately three inches of vegetable oil in a large pot (you want enough oil to cover the cakes). Heat to 350°F over medium heat. Working in two batches, fry the cakes for five to eight minutes, until hot on the inside and golden brown on the outside. Place them on the prepared baking sheet and keep warm in the oven while frying the rest. Place about one to two tablespoons of collards on top, garnish with diced red bell peppers, and serve.

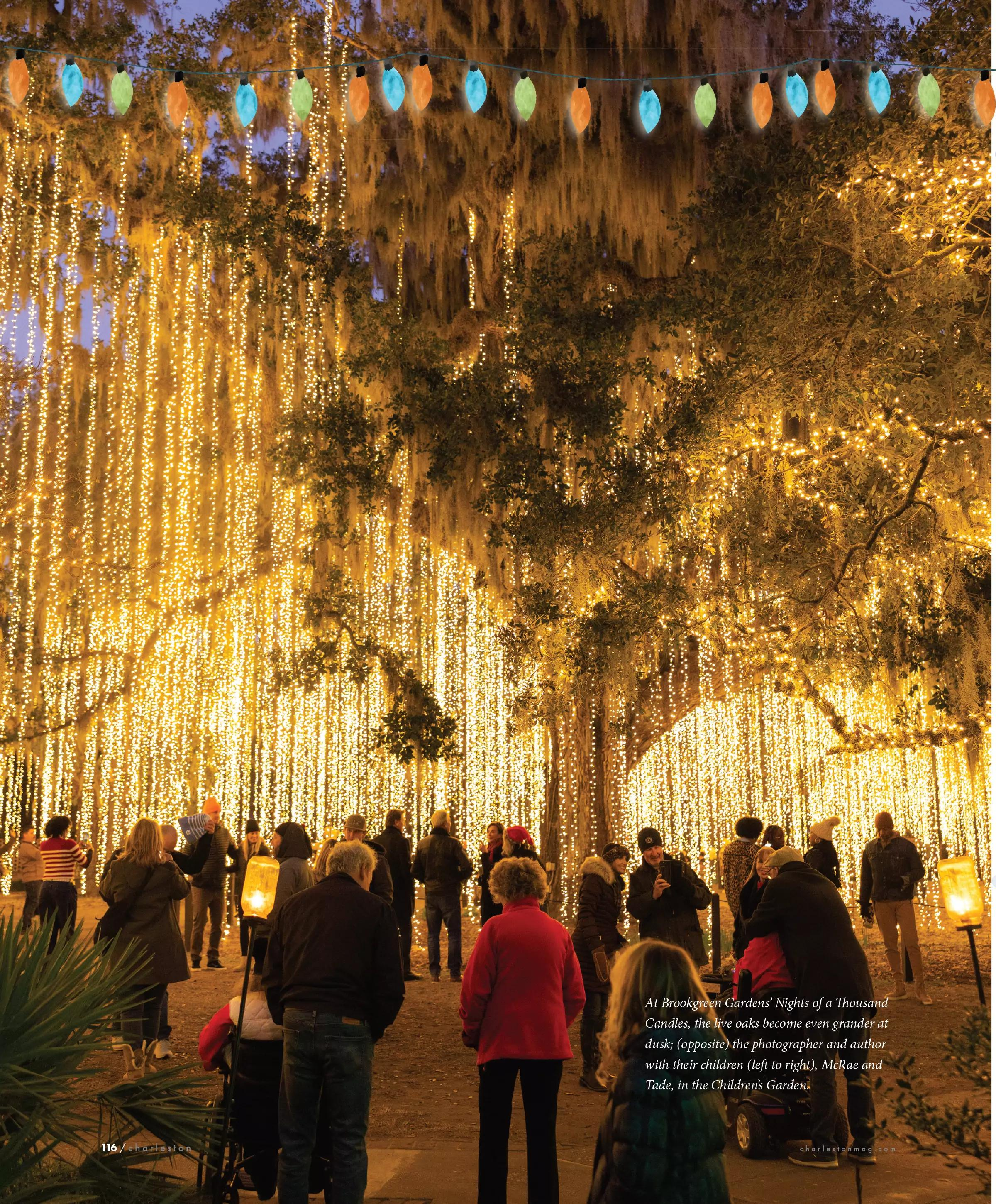
The cakes can be prepared and then frozen for about a month. Thaw in the refrigerator before frying.

For the spicy collards:

1 Tbs. vegetable oil
4 oz. applewood smoked bacon, diced
3 cups chopped yellow onions
2 Tbs. minced shallot
4 oz. bourbon
1 cup diced red bell peppers
1 lb. collard greens, stems removed and leaves cut into one-inch pieces
3 cups chicken or vegetable broth
2 pinches red pepper flakes
Kosher salt and black pepper

Heat the oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the bacon and cook until crisp. Add the onions and cook, stirring frequently, until tender, about five minutes. Add the shallots and cook until just fragrant, two to three minutes. Add the bourbon and allow the alcohol to cook out, about two minutes. Add the red bell peppers and cook for one minute. Stir in the collard greens and cook until they start to wilt. Add the stock and red pepper flakes.

Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes, or until the collards are tender and most of the liquid has been absorbed. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Drain well before putting on the cakes. Any leftover collards can be used in a frittata or soup.



At Brookgreen Gardens' Nights of a Thousand Candles, the live oaks become even grander at dusk; (opposite) the photographer and author with their children (left to right), McRae and Tade, in the Children's Garden.

Written by Stratton Lawrence

A Hammock Coast Holiday

Turn a visit to Brookgreen Gardens' Nights of a Thousand Candles into a festive, family-friendly adventure

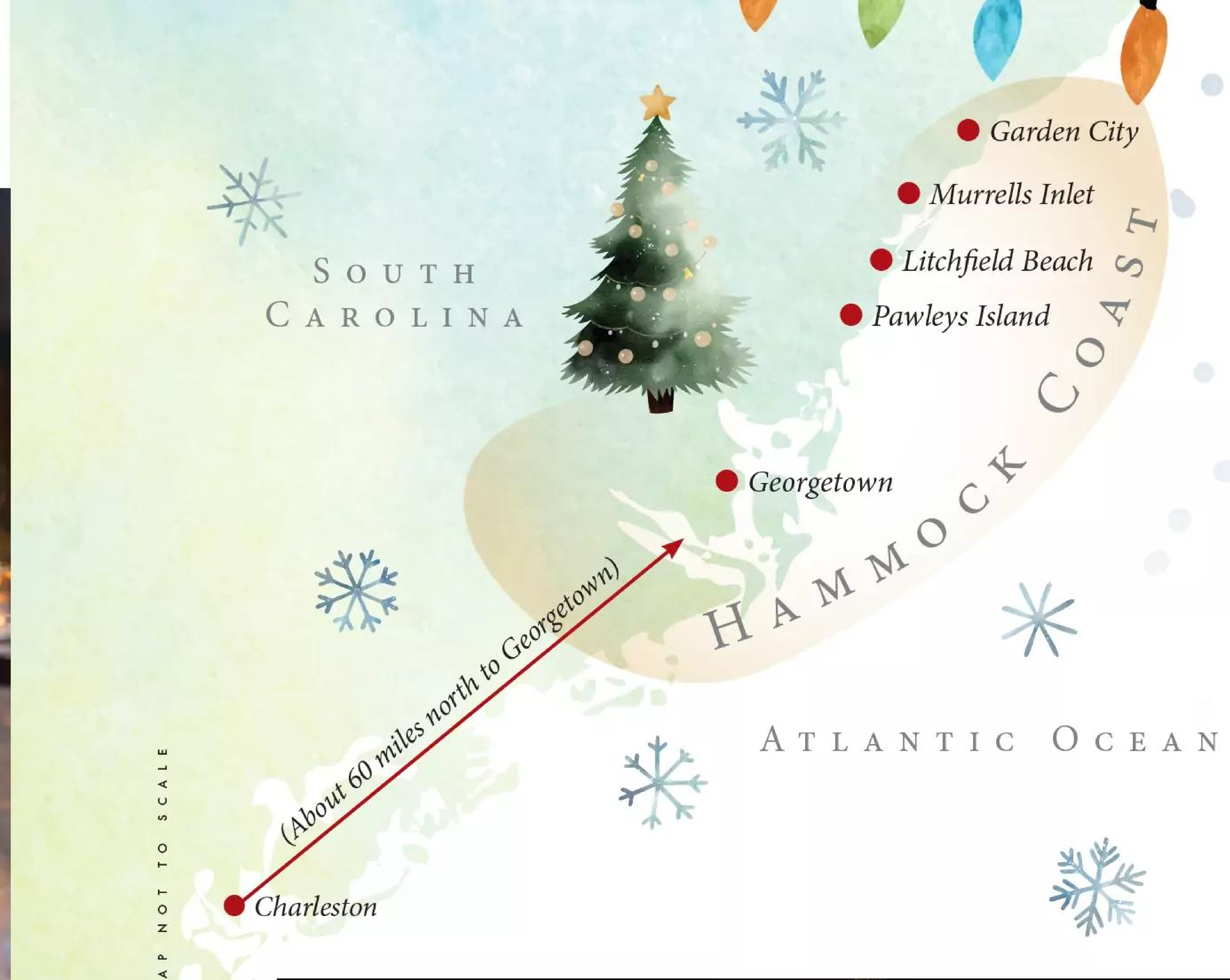
Photographs by Hunter McRae Lawrence

Just as the sun drops below the rice field horizon, I emerge from a surreal forest of glowing vines, my children's hands in mine. The sky lights up, purple and pink, and the sound of "Joy to the World" drifts through the trees from a faraway choir. I breathe deep. Some years, Christmas flies by, but this moment will last.

Brookgreen Gardens debuted its Nights of a Thousand Candles holiday display in 1999. In fewer than three decades, it's grown into one of the South's premier Christmas celebrations, far exceeding its initial thousand candles. On each evening that it's open from the day after Thanksgiving through January 4, volunteers light more than 3,000 wicks. Those flames are outnumbered by millions of electric lights that illuminate the country's largest sculpture garden, about 80 miles north of Charleston in Murrells Inlet.

The secret's out. A visit requires reservations, and the most popular nights book months in advance. After years of wishful thinking, we've finally committed to a family trip, building a long weekend around a night at Brookgreen Gardens, with plenty of time to relax and explore the Hammock Coast—from Garden City and Murrells Inlet down to historic Georgetown—on either end of our visit.

(Clockwise from top left) Stratton and his children gaze across a reflection pond just after sunset; daughter Tade takes in a few of the thousands of candles; chicken bog and hot chocolate are on offer at the food truck corral; a "cranberry bog" framed by white poinsettias makes a striking impression.


Garden City
Murrells Inlet
Litchfield Beach
Pawleys Island
SOUTH CAROLINA
HAMMOCK COAST
Georgetown
(About 60 miles north to Georgetown)
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Charleston
MAP NOT TO SCALE

(Clockwise from left) Brookgreen Gardens' soaring China fir is one of the Southeast's grandest Christmas trees; Stratton's son, McRae, takes in the array of LED vines overhead; Tade poses with her new bagpiper friend during a quick break from Scottish-tinged carols.

> *"Ten years ago, there was nothing to do in Georgetown but party in a field. Now, there are so many good places to eat."*
> *—a server at The Independent*

(Clockwise from top left) Tade twirls outside The George, a boutique hotel in Georgetown that opened in 2024; A mural by Charleston artist David Boatwright welcomes guests down a hallway beyond the cozy lobby, decked out for the holidays; The rooms at The George are relaxed yet refined.

Hospitality on the Hammock Coast

Georgetown's Front Street experienced a stunning revival in the last decade, capped by The George, a 56-room, waterfront hotel that opened in 2024. Stylish, woodsy interiors give the feeling of historical weight to the new building, while décor choices, like lampshades crafted from overturned baskets and a large-scale painting of an alligator and a mermaid by Charleston artist David Boatwright, set a relaxed, whimsical tone that nods to the Lowcountry.

We arrive in time to watch the sun set over the Sampit River, relaxing around a fire as the first nip of a cold front rolls in. We toss a few rounds of cornhole before stepping inside for dinner at The Independent. The upscale seafood-centric spot is a dinner destination for Pawleys Island residents, representing the change underway in Georgetown, where at least 16 restaurants now line Front Street alongside more outfitters and boutiques.

The demise of Georgetown's paper and steel mills has necessitated economic shifts in South Carolina's third-oldest city, paving the way for a new future built on tourism. Waterfront restaurants like River Room and Between the Antlers are thriving, as the area mirrors Beaufort's growth.

At The Independent, we order deviled eggs bedecked with fried oysters, a platter of diver scallops, and a bowl of she-crab soup liberal in its dollop of sherry. Our server, in her mid-20s, grew up here and returned home after college. "Ten years ago, there was nothing to do in Georgetown but party in a field," she laughs. "Now, there are so many good places to eat."

After a restful night's sleep, we stroll Front Street for some last-minute Christmas shopping before heading to Pawleys Island for a lunch reservation at Bistro 217. Chef Adam Kirby opened the restaurant 20 years ago with a sea-to-table ethos that preceded the trend, now almost an expectation. Heading north on Highway 17, Bistro 217 and Rustic Table, Kirby's more Southern-focused spot next door, feel like a last stand of thoughtful menus before entering Myrtle Beach's gauntlet of all-you-can-eat buffets farther north.

(Below) Downtown Georgetown is enjoying a rebirth with new restaurants, boutiques, and a charming hotel; The Harborwalk (middle) accesses restaurants and watering holes on the Sampit River.

Bistro 217 chef-owner Adam Kirby delivers a plate of bang-bang shrimp tacos; his flounder filet over local greens.

During a break from the kitchen, Kirby shows us the scars on his arm from harvesting stone crabs by hand, a coastal take on catfish "noodling" with potentially even more serious ramifications. The stone crabs are for personal consumption, but the flounder filet atop a bed of microgreens was caught by one of his commercial fisherman buddies. The thin-sliced mini cucumbers atop the bang-bang shrimp tacos are grown on Kirby's farm, 30 miles inland.

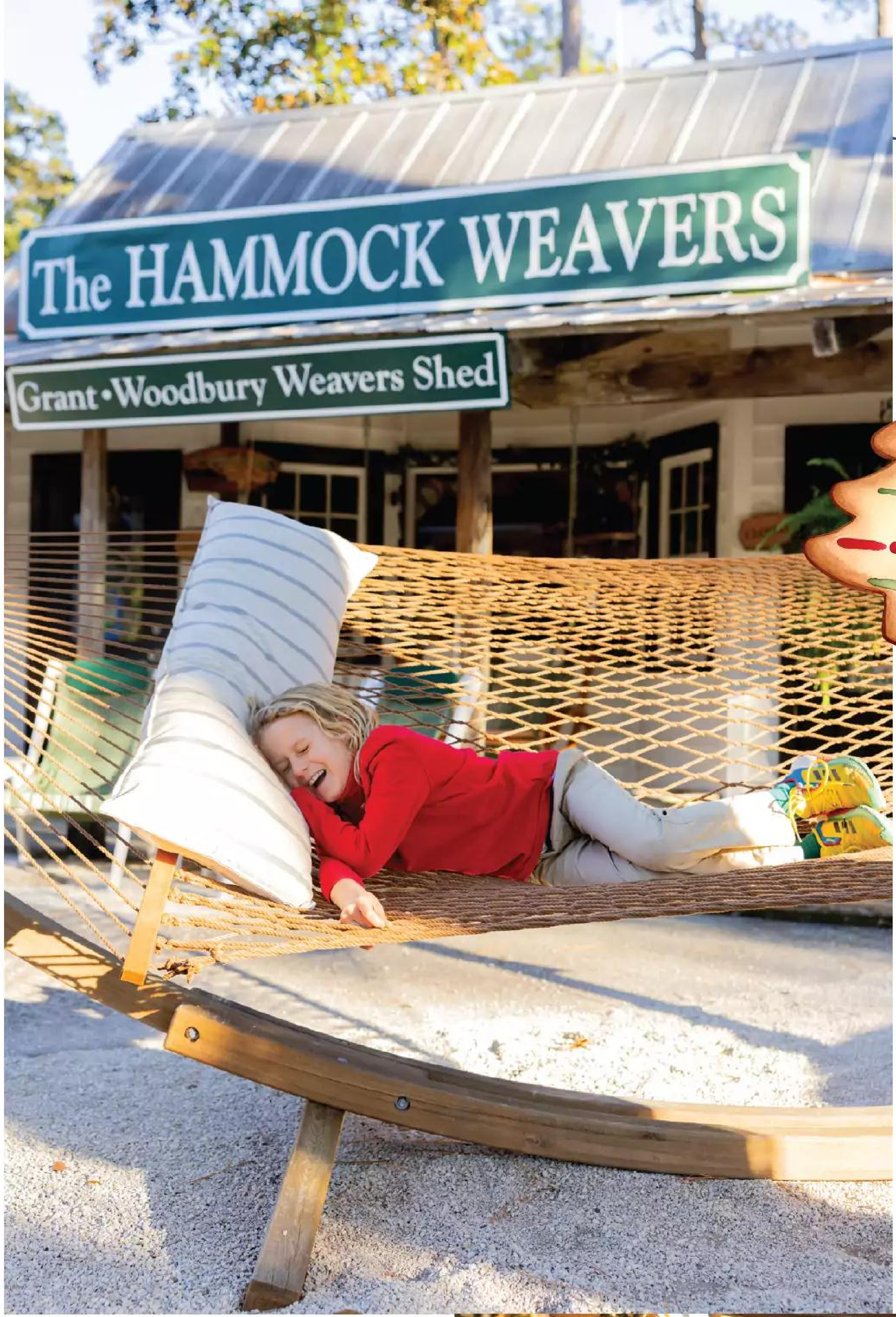
It's lunch, but we spoil the kids with a scoop of house-made roasted banana ice cream for dessert. It's a winner. Beyond satiated, we head across the street to the Hammock Shops Village. A multigenerational family band is playing Christmas tunes in the central gazebo as we stroll through a gem shop and a kitchen-goods store, before trying out the town's signature hammocks strung up around the complex.

In the Christmas Mouse, a year-round holiday store, we run into old friends from Mount Pleasant, also in town for Nights of a Thousand Candles. They visit every year and recommend that we hurry over to arrive before sunset.

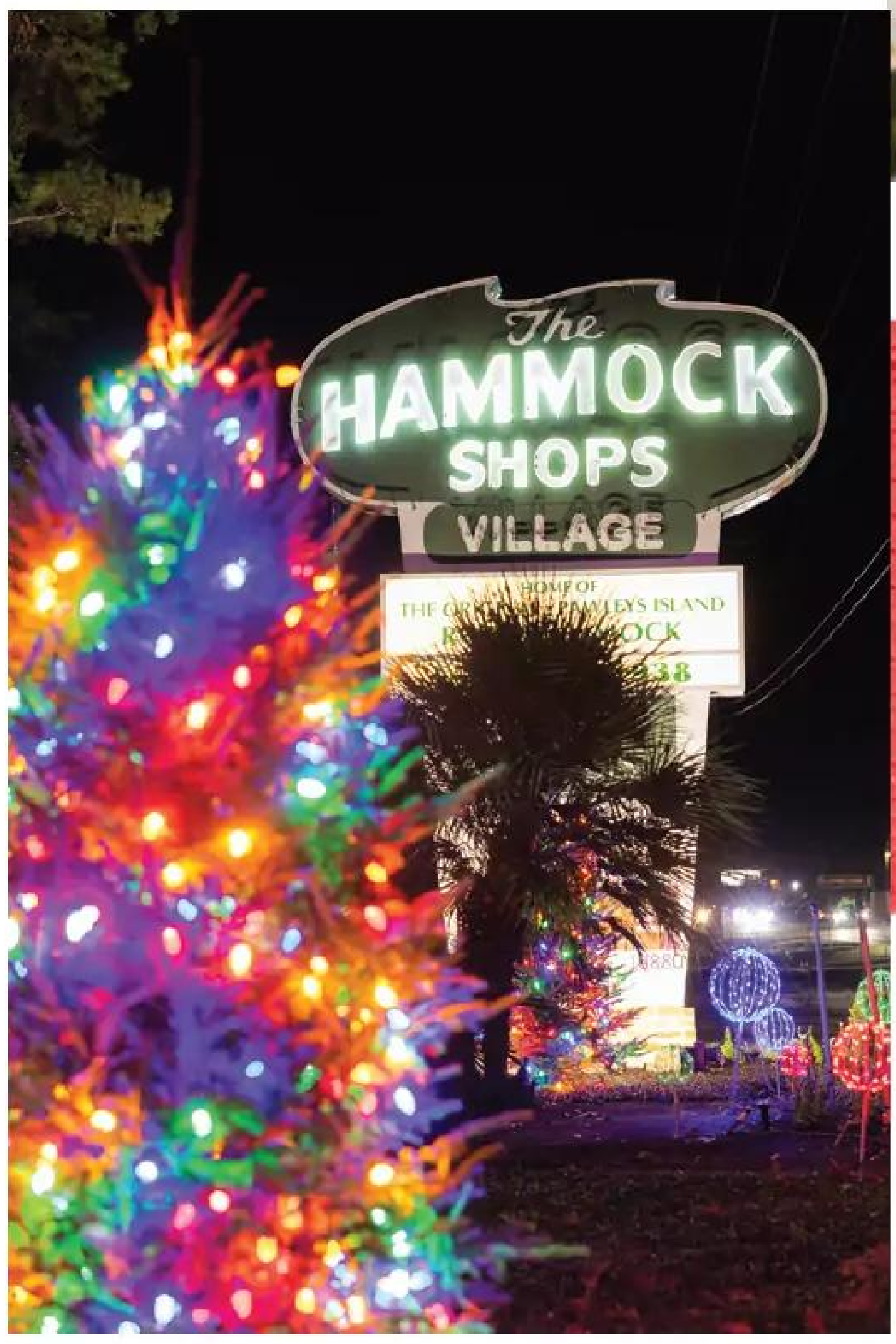
A Timeless Tradition

At 4 p.m., we're greeted by the impressive *Fighting Stallions* sculpture welcoming us to Brookgreen Gardens. It's a grandiose setting, and there's anticipatory energy in the parking lot as families ready their strollers. Within the first minutes of our walk through the sculptures and light displays, I'm taken aback, realizing this is certainly worth the effort of a day trip in future years, if that's what time allows. It's so much more than I expected.

We enter a scene of illuminated vines, draped high in the canopy. There are elegant worlds of white light, as well as playful zones decked out in blue and red hues around the Poetry Garden. In an already serenely beautiful place, the coming dusk, illuminated with thousands of candles, creates a calming hush. I love our drive through the holiday lights at James Island County Park each year, but the display at Brookgreen is something entirely different. It's like living inside *A Charlie Brown Christmas*.



The Hammock Shops Village is a great spot for last-minute holiday shopping or lounging after a hearty lunch; the holidays never end at the Christmas Mouse store. (Opposite) The pro lighting designers at Nights of a Thousand Candles know how to maximize the water feature's reflection.



> *"I love our drive through the holiday lights at James Island County Park each year, but the display at Brookgreen is something entirely different. It's like living inside* A Charlie Brown Christmas.*"*
> *—Stratton Lawrence*

After a blissful walk through a candelabra-lit path, we hear a bagpipe playing a medley of Christmas tunes. The piper's eyes glow as she smiles at our daughter, breaking into a Scottish-hued take on "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." It's a moment of magic among many, rivaled by the wonder of 500 pounds of cranberries floating amid white poinsettias in the reflecting pool and a colorful tunnel of lights to run through in the Children's Garden. There are crowds to patiently move through, but everywhere there's an aura of quiet elegance.

Once darkness fully arrives, a towering China fir to rival the one in New York's Rockefeller Plaza comes to life. We take in the spectacle before a final stop at the food truck corral, filling up on chicken bog and syrupy-rich hot chocolate. After loading sleepy, wonder-filled kids into the car, it's an easy 20-minute drive back to our cozy room at The George. Tonight's bedtime routine is a snap—whatever the modern equivalent of sugar plum fairies are, they're soon dancing in precious heads.

Beyond the Candles

The next morning, a Sunday, we let the kids sleep in, allowing me time for a sunrise jog through Georgetown. I'm left breathless by the cold air and another light show, this one fully natural. The sun's morning beams find cracks in the dense canopy of Spanish moss and live oak limbs, sculpting an ethereal scene across the town's quiet avenues. Church bells ring at nearby Prince George Winyah Parish Church, a brick-and-tabby sanctuary that held its first service in 1747. I wish I'd built in time for us to attend on this final Sunday of Advent, but we have a brunch reservation at the Caledonia Golf & Fish Club.

We arrive at a quintessential Lowcountry holiday scene—a roaring fireplace, a towering Christmas tree, and sweeping views of egrets and herons soaring over the marsh, a former rice field that abuts the golf course. It's an experience capped by a simple, perfect grouper sandwich that fuels an afternoon at Huntington Beach State Park, where

LOVE SHAK
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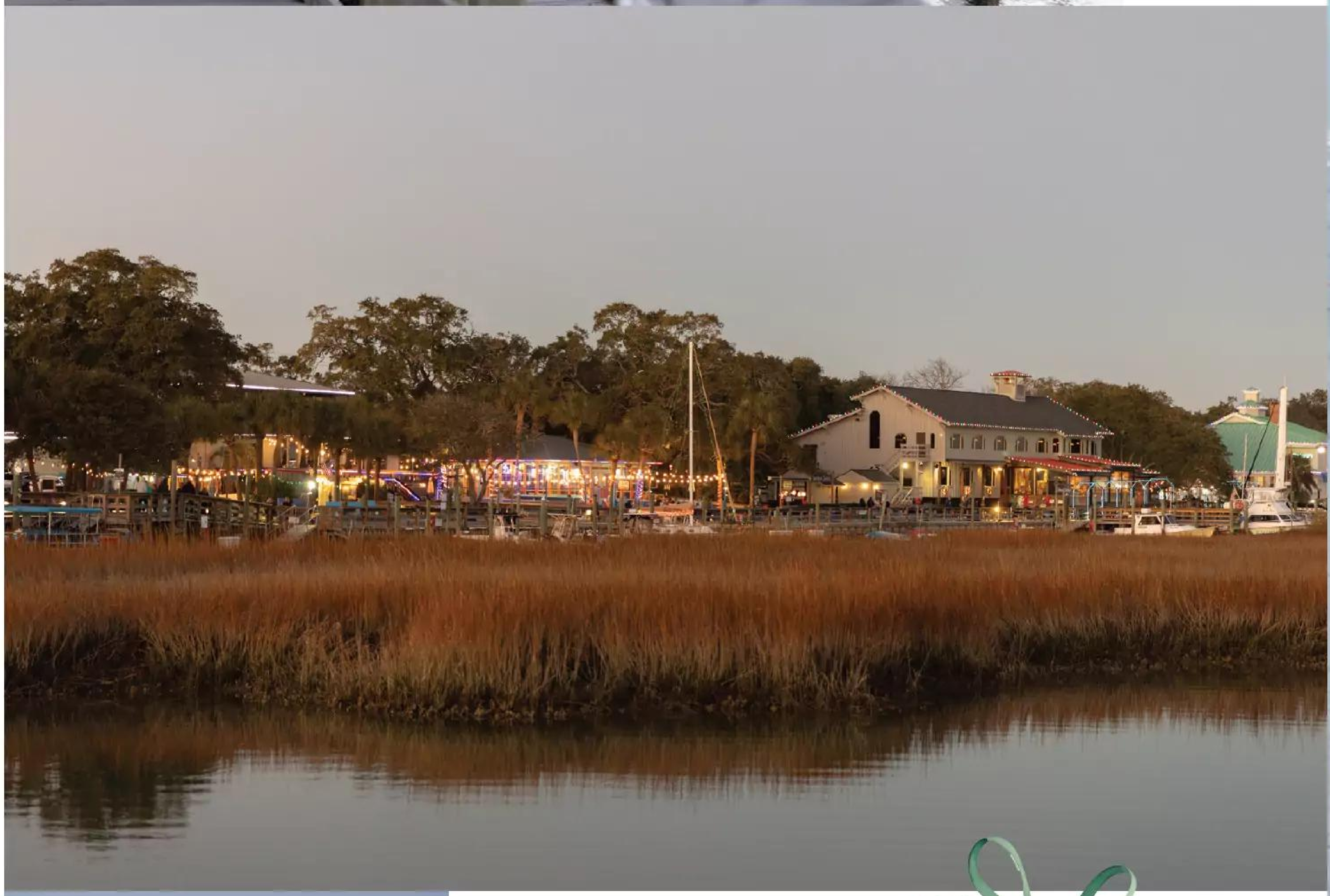

Visit the illuminated waterfront, complete with a 20-foot Christmas tree, at the MarshWalk in Murrells Inlet at sunset.

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USA Today/10 Best has named three beaches on the Hammock Coast the ***BEST IN SOUTH CAROLINA*** ... Pawleys Island (No. 1), Litchfield Beach (No. 3) and Huntington Beach State Park (No. 4).

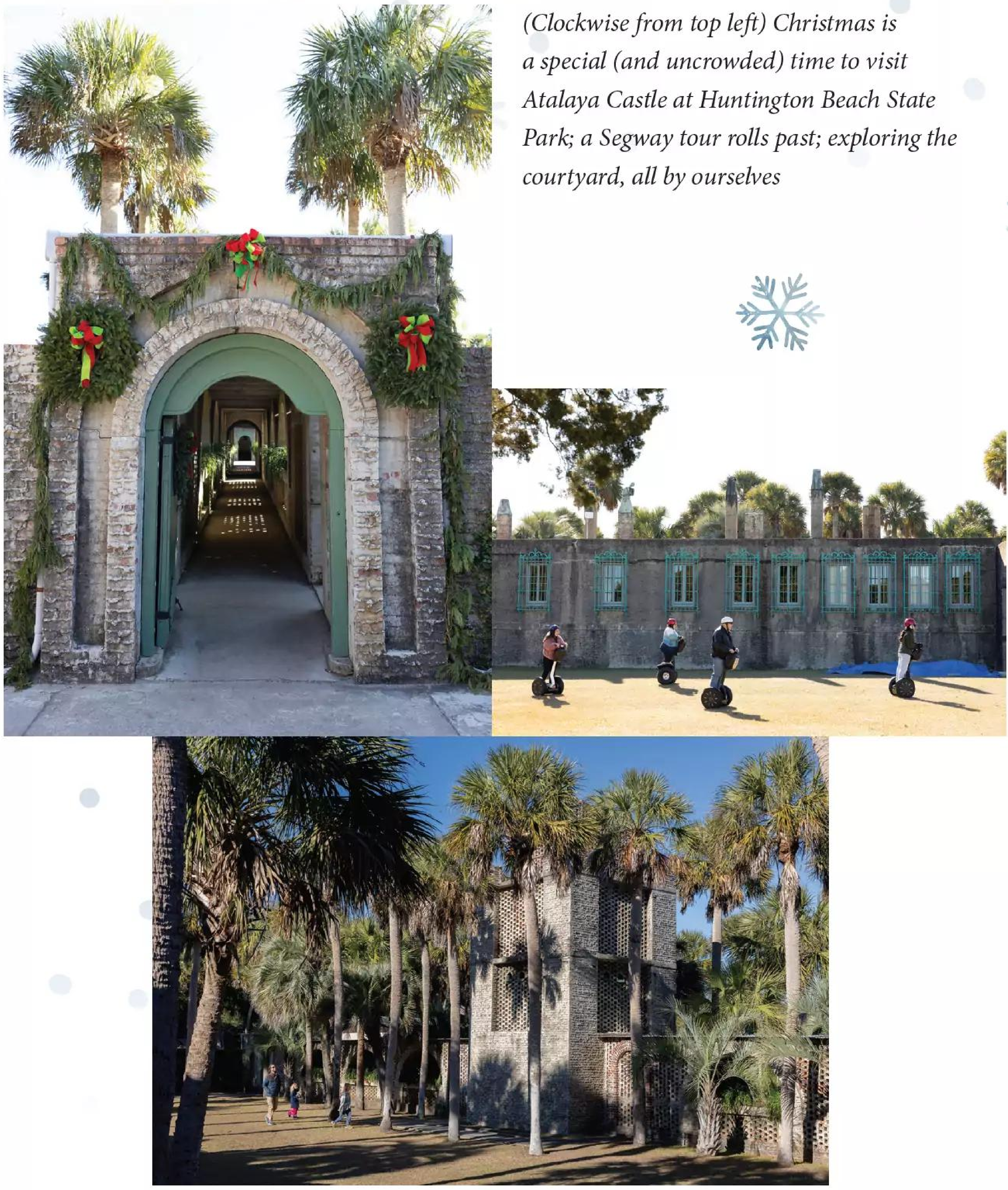
we eagerly explore the abandoned halls of Atalaya Castle, the Southern beach escape of industrialist Archer M. Huntington and his wife, sculptor Anna Hyatt Huntington, who also founded Brookgreen Gardens.

The state park sees light visitation this time of year—children ride bikes around the nearly car-free road and trails, and despite the brisk air, it feels like an idyllic time to visit. After a short hike on the Sandpiper Trail, we extend our walk to the beach and encounter only one other family enjoying the wide expanse.

It's been years since I've stopped at the MarshWalk in Murrells Inlet, so we've added a third night to our trip to take in the holiday display. We opt for a stay in the family cottage at the recently renovated Brookwood Inn, a classic motor lodge on the National Register of Historic Places. Julie and Rob Perez bought the roadside motel in 2022, rehabilitating it into a charming but unassuming retreat that feels miles away from the bustle of Highway 17. It puts us within five minutes of the MarshWalk, arriving in time to take in the sunset from the Christmas tree over the water at the end of the long dock.

On this Sunday evening, there's no line to meet Santa in his sleigh, so the kids take turns sharing their updated lists before dinner. Among the similar seafood restaurants along the MarshWalk, we choose Wicked Tuna for its scenic vantage over the water and its sushi program, a welcome transition back to healthier eating after a weekend of indulgences. Over dinner, the kids excitedly share their trip highlights—exploring the maritime forest and the hot chocolate at Brookgreen Gardens. It's a parenting success, and we've enjoyed every moment.

In the morning, I feel at peace, grounded by a change of scenery just a short drive up the road. Heading south back toward Georgetown, the woods lining the highway still feel like a forgotten stretch of coast. Many travelers breeze past the Hammock Coast on their way to Myrtle Beach or beyond. That's to the benefit of those who take the time to stop, even for a short wintertime walk on a beach that's short on crowds but abundant in natural beauty and holiday cheer.



(Clockwise from top left) Christmas is a special (and uncrowded) time to visit Atalaya Castle at Huntington Beach State Park; a Segway tour rolls past; exploring the courtyard, all by ourselves

Plan a Hammock Coast Getaway

STAY

The George: Views of the Sampit River complement the stylish décor at this laid-back boutique hotel that's at the crux of Georgetown's downtown transformation into a travel destination. *615 Front St., Georgetown; thegeorgehotelsc.com*

Brookwood Inn: Homey and welcoming, this renovated roadside motel sits away from the bustle of Highway 17. It's on the National Register of Historic Places and convenient to the MarshWalk. *5098 Hwy. 17-Business, Murrells Inlet; brookwoodinn.net*

Litchfield Beach & Golf Resort: Choose from condos, beachfront cottages, and stately homes along the fairway at this sprawling collection of rental properties with two on-site restaurants. *14276 Ocean Hwy., Pawleys Island; litchfieldbeach.com*

EAT & DRINK

Between the Antlers: Anchoring the north end of the Harborwalk, this local favorite balances creative entrees such as lemon ricotta seared scallops with a hopping bar scene. *100 Wood St., Georgetown; betweentheantlers.com*

The Independent: Indigo Road's (Oak Steakhouse, O-Ku) Georgetown outpost elevated dining on the Hammock Coast when

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Between the Antlers

COURTESY OF BETWEEN THE ANTLERS

Brookgreen Gardens

it opened in 2024 with its local seafood-driven menu. *615 Front St., Georgetown; theindependentsc.com*

🟩 **Bistro 217:** Along with sister restaurant Rustic Table next door, this chef-owned staple brought farm-to-table cooking to the Hammock Coast, and that ethos (and local flavors) remains at the helm. *10707 Ocean Hwy., Pawleys Island; bistro217.com*

🟦 **Caledonia Grillroom:** Views across the marsh—and the 18th hole of a classic Lowcountry golf course—set the scene at this casual lunch stop for a crab cake sandwich or fried shrimp plate. *369 Caledonia Dr., Pawleys Island; caledoniagolfandfishclub.com*

Caledonia Grillroom

🟧 **The Chive Blossom:** Enjoy lunch or dinner under oak trees at this decidedly eclectic spot, serving soups, salads, pastas, and seafood in creative combinations, like the Mediterranean salmon with spinach, heirloom tomatoes, and Kalamata olives. *85 N. Causeway Rd., Pawleys Island; chiveblossom.com*

🟩 **Wicked Tuna:** Waterfront dining on the MarshWalk featuring seafood, steaks, and sushi. *4123 Hwy.17-Bus, Murrells Inlet; thewickedtuna.com*

SHOP

🟦 **Black Mingo Outfitters:** Georgetown is surrounded by waterways and public land, and this Lowcountry outfitter sells the clothing and gear you need to get out and explore. *709 Front St., Georgetown; shop.blackmingo.com*

🟧 **The Harbor Shop:** From monogrammed canvas bags to embroidered dresses to sunglasses and local books, look to this classic gift shop for Lowcountry treasures. *602 Front St., Georgetown*

🟩 **The Hammock Shops Village:** Anchored by the Original Hammock Shop, this outdoor mall can fill a half-day of browsing its clothing boutiques, gem and jewelry shops, a toy store, and local craft shops. *10880 Ocean Hwy., Pawleys Island; hammockshops.com*

Huntington Beach State Park

DO

🟦 **Brookgreen Gardens:** The Southeast's preeminent sculpture garden spreads out over 9,000 acres, including a zoo featuring native animals. It's worthy of a full-day exploration before Nights of a Thousand Candles, or any time of year. *1931 Brookgreen Dr., Murrells Inlet; brookgreen.org*

🟧 **Huntington Beach State Park:** Enjoy three miles of undeveloped beachfront, hiking trails through the maritime forest, and the ruins of Atalaya Castle, a 1930s estate, at this 2,500-acre state park. *16148 Ocean Hwy., Murrells Inlet; southcarolinaparks.com/huntington-beach*

🟩 **Murrells Inlet MarshWalk:** A half-mile of boardwalk and eight restaurants span Main Creek at this idyllic place for a stroll, a cocktail, or a platter of fried seafood. Its annual MarshWalk Wonderland of Lights free walk-through light display runs from November 28 through December 31. *4025 Hwy. 17-Business, Murrells Inlet; marshwalk.com*

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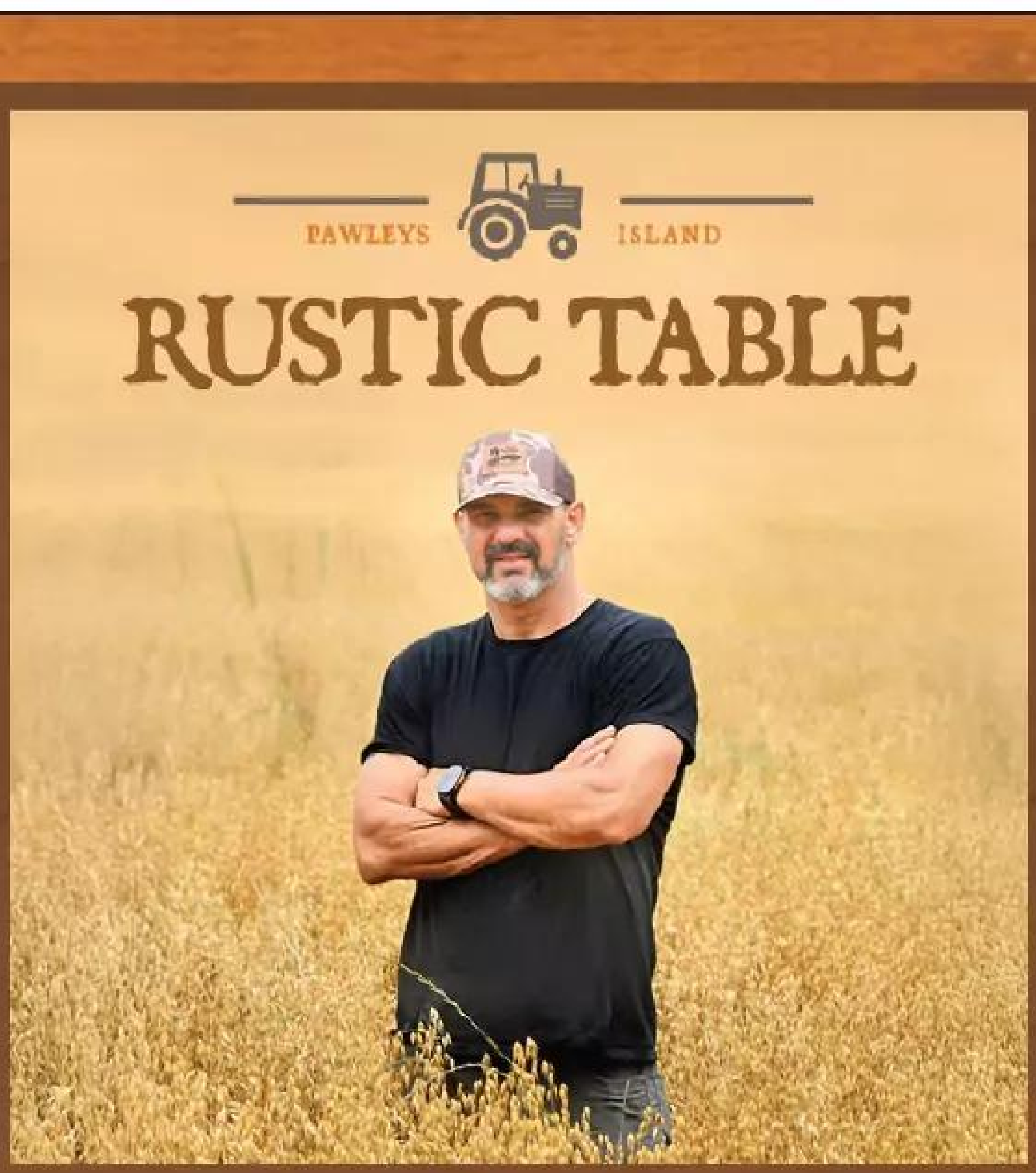

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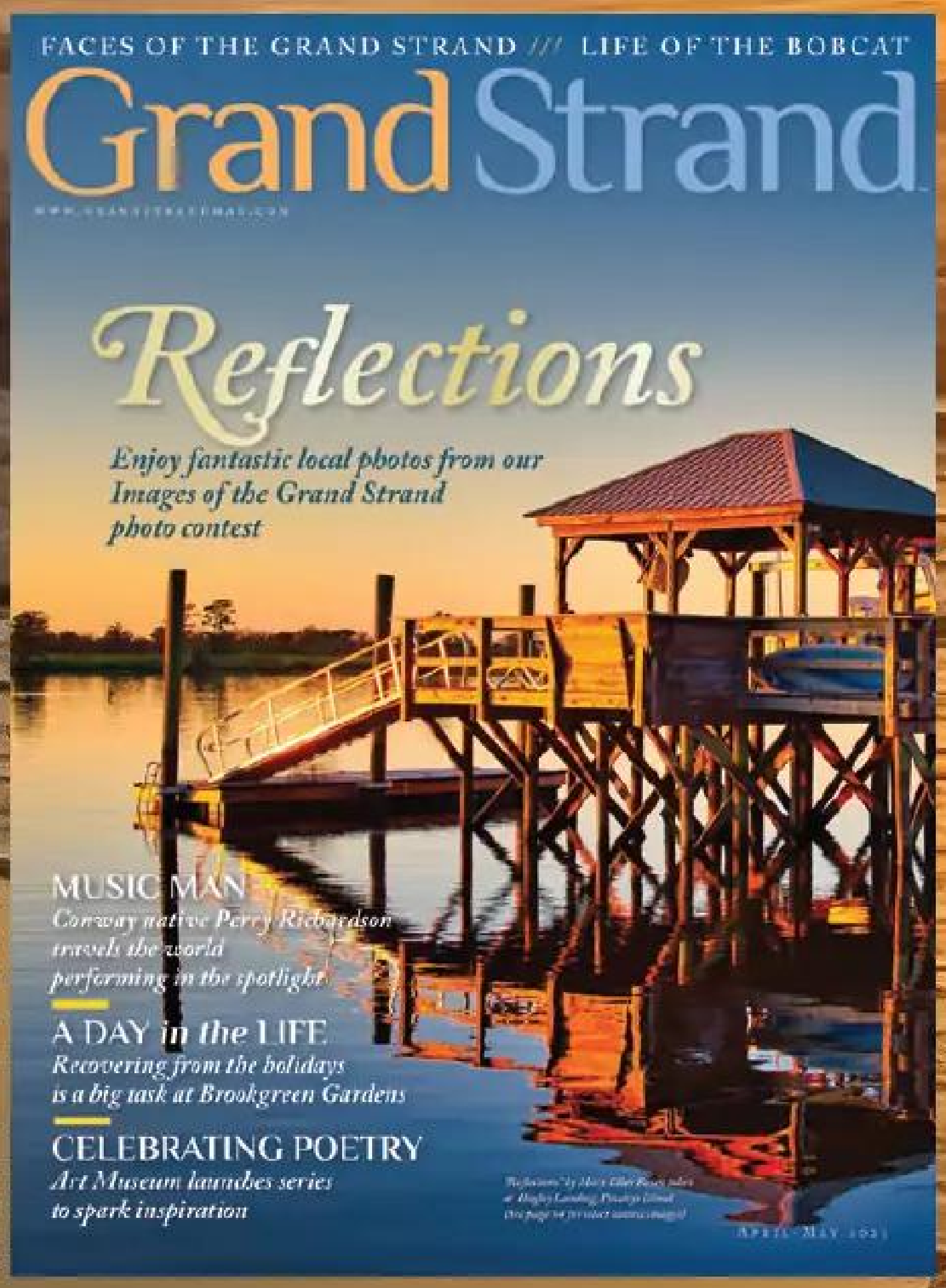
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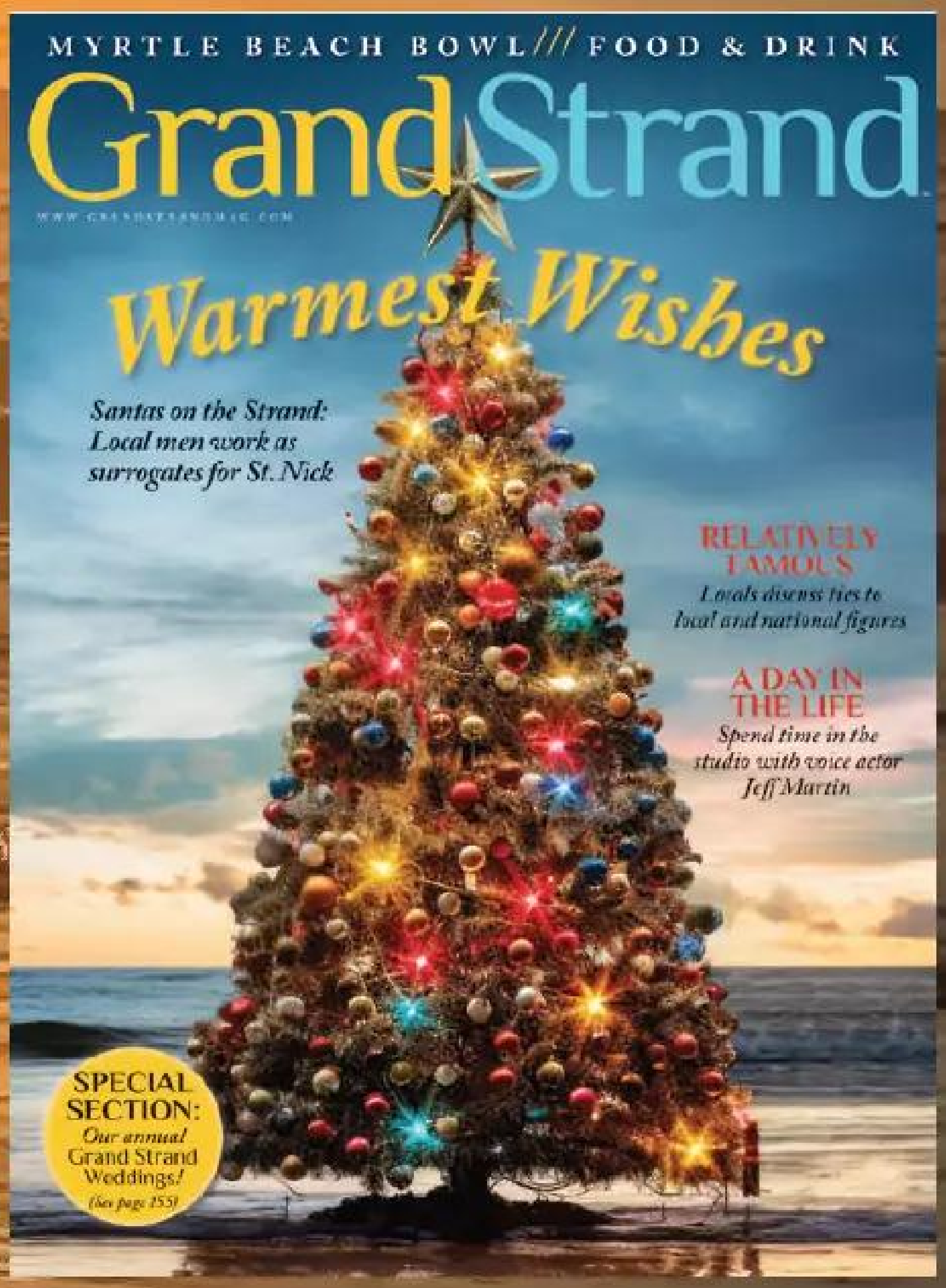
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CHEF HUMM AT CHARLESTON GRILL // A DICKENS OF A DINNER

Sweet Harvest

/// **LEARN HOW A LOCAL FIREFIGHTER** turned his beekeeping hobby into a buzzing business that helps farmers pollinate their crops and offers a taste of Lowcountry fields and flowers. **See page 136**

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW CEBULKA

(NEW & NOTABLE)

Our taste-and-tell guide to some of the latest and most noteworthy food-and-beverage offerings

—written by JEFF ALLEN

(Left to right) Chef Daniel Humm began his one-year collaboration with The Charleston Place in October; the butter-poached lobster, served with squash and lemongrass; the roasted eggplant with coriander, roasted garlic, and hazelnuts; the spare, white dining room

Chef Daniel Humm x The Charleston Place

Slipping into the Charleston Grill unveils a profound shift: a space once as enveloping as warm velvet appears starkly lit, a white-walled canvas reverberating with the hum of conversation. Framed photos depicting mounds of dirt stare out across the expanse. While the hotel undergoes its planned renovation, chef Daniel Humm has arrived for a year-long residency.

Famed for guiding Manhattan's Michelin-starred Eleven Madison Park through various reincarnations, he now plants his refined, climate-conscious sensibilities in Lowcountry soil. The endeavor aspires to marry global ambitions with regional ingredients. With a prix fixe starting at $135, the offerings are serious but not ostentatious. The inch-thick directory to the Grill's deep cellar seems intact, the cocktail program delivers near perfection, and a largely local floor staff provides familiar faces. The food, however, is decidedly different.

The focused menu layers tight precision and technique among contemporary fine dining themes. An amuse of clear "tomato water" flush with basil sets a vegetal tone. Radish carpaccio dresses impossibly thin slices of apple, daikon, and pistachio in a salad as crisp as a winter morning. Local crudo is accentuated by bursts of finger lime and blunt horseradish heat.

The butter-poached lobster, glossed with squash and lemongrass, is decadent but delicate, bowls wiped clean with the remaining flakes of a thousand-layered bread roll striated with fried onions. Arriving tables eye the whole roast chicken "for two" that is paraded to and fro as a testament that the ordering party is, in fact, receiving a whole bird in the form of two breasts and a cup of "reduction" (thigh meat in consommé with a toupee of chicken foam).

The city hasn't seen an opening with such transformative potential since Sean Brock descended on McCrady's with a suitcase full of molecular gastronomy. Like Brock, Humm will discover that Charleston has a cuisine of its own. He could use this year to interpret its depths—gold rice new from the field, the musky slime of midsummer okra, and briny pluff-scented oysters—lest he be just another itinerant influencer.

The Charleston Place
224 King St. | (843) 577-4522
chefhummcharlestonplace.com
Wednesday-Sunday, 5-10 p.m.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (PORTRAIT) BLAKE SHORTER & (3) JOVANI DEMETRIE/COURTESY OF THE CHARLESTON PLACE

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15 MINUTES WITH:

MARK CONNELLY

Get to know the co-owner of Edisto Gold Honey, who turned his beekeeping hobby into liquid gold, offering a sweet taste of the Lowcountry

EDISTO
GOLD
HONEY

Longtime apiarist Mark Connelly started his certified South Carolina grown company in 2019, bottling raw, unfiltered honey while helping local farmers pollinate their crops.

CM: How did you get into beekeeping?

MC: When I was growing up in the foothills of North Carolina, my mother was given four hives by a retiring beekeeper. She knew nothing about bees so she started reading books and asking questions. She did well with those hives, and they began to multiply. At around 16 years old, at her request, I carried boxes of honey from the bee yard to the kitchen, where my family would spend the day spinning out the honey with our little extracting machine and putting it into jars. My mother sent my younger brother and me to the monthly beekeeping classes hosted by our county extension office. That's where we met the old-timers and learned so much more about beekeeping. I bought my first pickup truck at around 17 and started hauling hives to the apple orchards for pollination and selling my honey at the local general store.

CM: When did you begin keeping bees here?

MC: After graduating with a degree in civil engineering from The Citadel, I pursued different career paths, but beekeeping was, more or less, a hobby that I enjoyed. After several years of providing honey through pollination services, I discussed starting a business with David Anderson, the owner of Black Pearl

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (PORTRAIT & HONEYCOMB) ANDREW CEBULKA, (FAMILY & COUPLE) SHANDA TEER/IN HIS IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHY, & (FIG EXTERIOR) ZIMMYTWS/SHUTTERSTOCK & COURTESY OF (2) MARK CONNELLY

(FAVORITE THINGS)

➤ **The Great Outdoors:** "We enjoy things like tubing down the river, kayaking, and exploring nature trails."

➤ **Family Man:** "My family is everything. I enjoy having a day with them in the kitchen where my older sons come up with new recipes and everyone joins in by cooking from scratch."

➤ **Dine Around:** "While I value the peace living in the country brings, it also makes me appreciate the occasional trip downtown to enjoy the whole culinary experience the city brings."

➤ **Bulldog Faithful:** "I enjoy visiting my alma mater and remembering those formative years when I began my journey into adulthood and learned so many life lessons that have proven to be invaluable."

➤ **Still Starry-eyed:** "Watching the sunset with my wife, Rebecca, and seeing the night sky full of stars is one of my favorite ways to end the day."

organic blueberry farm on the Edisto River, and we became partners. That's how Edisto Gold Honey was born. We still have hives at that farm, which now grows several other types of berries and plants, including lavender.

CM: These days, your hives are on many farms. Tell us about that.
MC: We have hundreds of hives spread throughout the area—St. George, Bowman, Ravenel, and John's Island. We provide pollination services to several farms, so at any given time our hives are either building up, pollinating, or making honey. We move them around regularly and try to put them in the best spots possible for their health and for honey production.

CM: Edisto Gold Honey is raw and flavorful. Do you combine honeys from all of the locations for a consistent flavor?
MC: Yes, our honey is a blended source of wildflower, blueberries, blackberries, and whatever nectar is flowering at the time. Its taste can vary slightly during different times of the year. We also offer infused varieties, which are created by warming the honey just enough to stir in the infused ingredients and letting the flavors merge together.

CM: You're also a firefighter. How do you balance it all?
MC: My firefighter schedule is 48 hours on and 96 hours off at Dorchester County Fire and Rescue. When I get off shift, it's full speed ahead catching up in the bee yards and anything else that needs to be done. Thankfully, I have a crew that helps keep things going while I'm at the station. Also, a few years ago, I handed off the majority of my deliveries to two local distributors and that has helped a lot. Basically, I pretty much work all the time.

CM: What are your goals?
MC: The more hives we have, the better. We need honey to keep our customers happy, so that's the main focus, but pollination is definitely something that I want to continue to do more of. I also hope to offer beekeeping classes in the future. —*Marion Sullivan*

VALMONT

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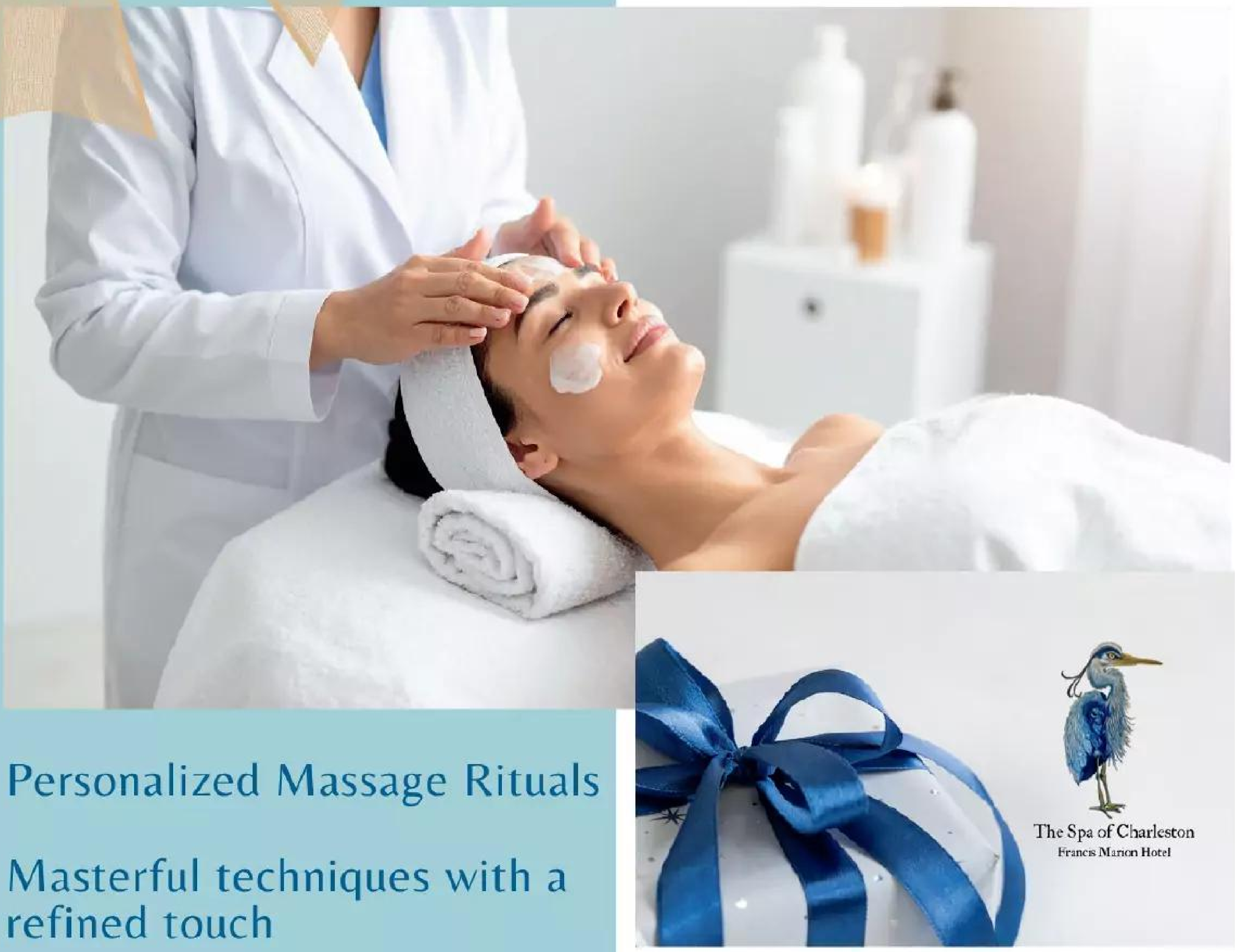

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Chef Brian Landry

Spotlight on Our Expert Host: *Chef Brian Landry Joins Premier Tours & Travel's Expertly Done Culinary & Wine Travel Series*

Born and raised in New Orleans, Chef Brian Landry is one of the South's most respected culinary voices, known for his deep commitment to Gulf Coast cuisine, sustainability, and the stories behind the food. With a career that blends classic technique with regional authenticity, Landry has built a legacy grounded in tradition and innovation.

Charleston holds a special place in Chef Landry's journey. While studying Culinary Arts at Johnson & Wales University, he trained under Chef Bob Waggoner at the iconic, elegant, Charleston Grill, where he learned the art of blending classic French cuisine with the soulful flavors of the South—a culinary philosophy that still defines his work today.

Landry's résumé is rich with accolades and influence. He served as Executive Chef at the renowned Galatoire's in New Orleans and later opened Borgne, a seafood-focused restaurant that earned a James Beard nomination for Best New Restaurant. In 2018, he co-founded QED Hospitality alongside Emery Whalen, creating and managing hospitality concepts in New Orleans and Nashville, including the celebrated Jack Rose and L.A. Jackson.

His latest endeavor—a collaboration with the James B. Beam Distilling Company in Kentucky—brings his passion for American culinary tradition into sharp focus. There, he helped create The Kitchen Table, the distillery's signature restaurant, in partnership with 7th and 8th-generation master distillers Fred and Freddie Noe. The restaurant celebrates the warmth of bourbon culture, family heritage, and the shared experience of food and drink.

Now, Premier Tours & Travel is thrilled to announce to the readers of *Charleston* magazine that Chef Landry is the newest culinary voice in its Expertly Done Culinary & Wine Travel series—a collection of immersive journeys where food, wine, culture, and expertly curated travel converge in collaboration with our hand-selected Expert Hosts.

With a vision to explore the world through a culinary lens, Premier Tours & Travel will debut two intimate, chef-accompanied departures in 2027 to Scotland and Ireland, focusing on the legendary world of whiskey and scotch. From behind-the-scenes distillery experiences to storytelling dinners and market visits, the tours will offer guests a taste of tradition, terroir, and the people behind it all.

As the tour architect and operator, Premier Tours & Travel specializes in globally inspired, locally rooted travel—crafting small-group experiences designed to foster connection, authenticity, and unforgettable moments.

While Chef Landry won't be behind the stove during the tours, his presence and contacts will elevate the experience through cultural insight, curated tastings, and personal connections to the distilling world. These upcoming trips offer a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to explore Ireland or Scotland alongside one of the South's most accomplished chefs.

This isn't just travel. This is travel, expertly done.

To pre-register for our 2027 departures with Chef Brian Landry, call or email us today: 1-843-237-9903 | admin@premiertravelsc.com

Visit www.premiertravelsc.com to learn more about our Expertly Done Culinary & Wine Travel tours.

a curated guide to dining in the Lowcountry

(dining guide)

CHARLESTON PENINSULA

39 RUE DE JEAN

A short stroll down John Street from King, find a favorite spot for casual dining. This brasserie is touted for its menu française, especially the steak frites, escargot, onion soup, and mussels (in six choices of broth). *(MS) 39 John St., (843) 722-8881, holycityhospitality.com. $$-$$$; L, D, & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

82 QUEEN

The charming rambling rooms and quaint courtyard of this French Quarter establishment make the perfect backdrop for Southern and Lowcountry fare, including she-crab soup, fish and grits, and tomato pie. *(DS) 82 Queen St., (843) 723-7591, 82queen.com. $$-$$$$; L, D, & Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 🌳 🐾

167 RAW OYSTER BAR

This riff on a New England-style oyster eatery offers the expected stellar raw bar and expanded its menu after moving to bigger quarters. Faves include lobster rolls and tacos, seafood po' boys, and a mean ceviche. First come, first served; it's open from 11 to 11, seven days a week. *(MS) 193 King St., (843) 579-4997, 167raw.com. $$$-$$$$; L, D.* 🍸 🌙 🌳

167 SUSHI BAR

Grab one of the 24 seats at the original 167 on East Bay to sip on sake, beer, or wine while noshing on sushi and snacks. Mix your selection of nigiri with an intriguing array of rice dishes, seaweed salad, and osetra caviar. *(MS) 289 East Bay St., (843) 625-3031, 167raw.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 🌙 🌳

ALLORA NEW!

Inspired by the coastal charm of the Amalfi region, this downtown Italian joint features a multitude of places to linger, including a plush, pink dining room and lofty rooftop bar. Go for the sumptuous pork ragù served with a cloud of creamy ricotta, or a tableful of crudi and antipasti plates. Short on time? Grab a sweet treat from the walk-up window of the coffee and dessert bar—the pistachio gelato is heavenly. *(HR) 114 Spring St. (843) 410-0845, allorachs.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 🌳

AMEN STREET FISH & RAW BAR

At this seafood house with an easy spirit and slightly nostalgic air, enjoy the raw bar selection, then add the must-have shrimp corn dogs, she-crab soup, and shrimp and grits. *(MS) 205 East Bay St., (843) 853-8600, amenstreet.com. $$-$$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

ANSON

Across from the City Market, Anson greets diners with a stunning monochrome dining room, accented with brilliant red. It's famous for its use of Lowcountry ingredients—and the whole crispy flounder with apricot shallot sauce. *(MS) 12 Anson St., (843) 577-0551, ansonrestaurant.com. $$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿

THE ARCHER

The minds behind casual eatery Berkeley's created this more elevated concept in the Meeting Street Lofts building. The bar is The Archer's beating heart, offering an inventive cocktail program, while creative plates—fried eggplant spiked with fish sauce and Thai chili—and comfort fare round out the menu. *(ML) 601 Meeting St., Ste. 140, (843) 737-5162, thearchercharleston.com. $-$$$. D.* 🍸 🌙 Ⓟ ♿

BABAS ON CANNON

Co-owners Edward Crouse and Marie Stitt run this chic, Euro-style neighborhood cafe. In the morning, enjoy their famous tall quiche with a cappuccino. Cruise by later for a glass of wine from the beautifully curated list, accompanied by a pickled shrimp salad. *(MS) 11 Cannon St. (843) 284-6260, babasoncannon.com. $-$$$; B, L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

BAR 167

With a whitewashed exterior offset by cerulean blue, the look and feel of this 167 offshoot is modern Mykonos. The cocktail list is expansive, including gin and tonics on tap and a wine list that leans Mediterranean. While the food menu is more limited, it delivers on a few of those super fresh seafood dishes the restaurant group is known for, such as seared scallops with smoked trout roe and the jumbo lump crab roll. *(ML) 5 Fulton St., (843) 253-0300, 167raw.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 🌙 🌳

BASIC KITCHEN

Nab a sunlit corner at this clean-eats haven and start with fresh-pressed green juice or a white Negroni. Then, dig into the tempura-fried cauliflower wings with cashew ranch. The veggie-packed Basic Bowl is bright on the eyes and palate, and the Naughty Burger is 100-percent grass-fed beef. The goal: food that leaves you nourished, with energy to burn. *(MS) 82 Wentworth St., (843) 789-4568, basickitchen.com. $-$$$; L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

BAY STREET BIERGARTEN

"Bavarian inspired, Southern made" is the motto at this German-style beer bar. Come for the 40 beers rotating on tap and a menu of hearty eats, including pretzels, tots, brats, and jägerschnitzel, and stay for the spacious, dog-friendly outdoor patio, 15 TVs, Ping-Pong table, cornhole, and live music. *(MS) 549 East Bay St., (843) 266-2437, baystreetbiergarten.com. $$; L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 🌙 ♿ 🌳 Ⓟ 🐾

charleston magazine

The Dining Guide is a service to our readers and is organized geographically. Different areas are featured in each issue, but the comprehensive guide can be found at guide.charlestonmag.com. Visits by our reviewers are anonymous, and the reviewer's initials follow each listing. Unless noted, all restaurants accept major credit cards.

Prices:
Average price of a dinner entree
(lunch, if dinner isn't served):
Under $15 = $
$15-$25 = $$
$25-$35 = $$$
$35+ = $$$$

Symbols:
Breakfast = B
Lunch = L
Dinner = D
Brunch = BR
NEW! New or updated listing
🍸 Full bar
🌙 Late night dining (after 10 p.m.)
Ⓟ Parking
♿ Wheelchair accessible
🌳 Outdoor seating
Ⓥ Valet parking
🐾 Dog friendly

BEECH

Perfect for a power-up, this counter-service spot offers fresh, fast, and healthy food made with chicken, fruit, fish, rice, and vegetables. Try the açaí-based Delecta Bowl, or choose from an abundant array of poke bowls, smoothies, and juices. Bulk up with bagels, wraps, and salads. *(MS) 315 King St., (843) 212-5414, beechrestaurants.com. $; B, L, D.* ♿

BERKELEY'S

At this casual eatery on upper Rutledge Avenue, crispy chicken parm gets topped with "grandma" sauce and a blanket of mozzarella, while the cheesesteaks are piled with shaved rib eye, Duke's, and house-made cheese whiz. Make dessert a cup of Frigid Bits ice cream (featuring flavors like salted honey baklava and blackberry jam biscuit.) *(HR) 624 1/2 Rutledge Ave., (843) 501-7779, eatatberkeleys.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🌳 ♿ 🐾

BEAUTIFUL SOUTH

From the minds behind Sichuan spot Kwei Fei, this sleek space in The Guild building focuses on American-style Chinese offerings and the cuisine of southern China. Think roasted pork belly, Mongolian beef, and scallion oil noodles. There are also inventive cocktails, like the house martini made with sesame gin. *(ML) 128 Columbus St., beautifulsouthchs.com. $$; L, D, Sat. BR.* ♿ 🍸

{DECEMBER 3, 10, 17, & 18} DICKENS DINNER

Now in its 23rd year, this beloved Yuletide tradition includes a sumptuous four-course meal inspired by *A Christmas Carol and* prepared by Circa 1886 chef Marc Collins. In addition to the feast, guests can enjoy a reading of Charles Dickens' famous novella by storyteller Tim Lowry. *Circa 1886, 149 Wentworth St.. Wednesday & Thursday, 6:30 p.m. $130. (843) 853-7828, circa1886.com*

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CIRCA 1886

BIG BAD BREAKFAST

This outpost of chef John Currence's Southern diner chain slings all things brekkie seven days a week. The hash cakes, BLT omelet with zesty tomato gravy, biscuits and gravy, or anything Cajun-ish—such as the boldly spiced andouille or the fried oyster and shrimp po' boy—are standouts. *(MS) 456 Meeting St., (843) 459-1800, bigbadbreakfast.com. $-$$; B, L.* ♿ 🍸 Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

BIG GUN BURGER SHOP

If you like your burger full of surprises (say, with peach jalapeño mustard or fried kale), Big Gun is your place. At this hole-in-the-wall, fan favorites are happy hour and the "towering inferno burger" with beef and pulled pork, barbecue sauce, queso fresco, and habanero slaw. *(MS) 137 Calhoun St., (843) 789-3821, bigguncharleston.com. $-$$; D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 🌙 ♿

BINTÜ ATELIER

Tucked into the largely residential Eastside with half of its seating on a tented patio, this West African restaurant feels at once straight out of Senegal or the Caribbean and organic to the neighborhood. Inside the bright yellow cube of a building, reggae emanates from the turntable, while diners share curry turnovers, grilled chicken wings, and thiéboudieun (red rice) washed down with freshly squeezed soursop-pineapple juice or cold sorrel (hibiscus) tea. *(ML) 8-D Line St., (347) 478-4144, bintuatelier.com. $$-$$$; D.* ♿ 🌳

BISTRONOMY BY NICO

Chef Nico Romo carries on the convivial spirit and some of the French pan-Asian flavors from his former King Street staple, Fish, at this sleek spot on Spring Street. Settle in for your favorite happy hour and stay for bistro classics, such as steak frites, curry crab soup, and of course, that tuna tartare with the shrimp chips you so fondly remember. *(SB) 64 Spring St., (843) 410-6221, bistronomybynico.com. $$$$; D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 🌳 ♿

BLIND TIGER PUB

Discover a fresh menu that boasts smoked wings, avocado toast with pickled shrimp, a hearty duck sandwich, and a pork cracklins pimiento cheese combo at this Broad Street pub with a historic courtyard. Brunch options range from decadent bananas Foster waffles to shrimp and grits with sherry cream sauce. *(MS) 36-38 Broad St., (843) 872-6700, blindtigerchs.com. $$-$$$; B, L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 🌳 Ⓥ ♿ 🌙 🐾

BODEGA

Taking inspiration from the bodegas of his childhood spent in New York City, chef Alec Gropman adds a twist to old-school breakfast sandwiches (pulled pork and fried green tomatoes)—plus deli classics and salads—at this colorful Ann Street spot. Here's where to indulge in brunch-worthy craft cocktails, including the Bodega Bloody served with candied bacon. Check out the second location in Mount Pleasant. *(HR) 23 Ann St., (843) 297-4772, bodegachs.com. $$; B, L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌙 🌳 🐾

BRASSERIE LA BANQUE

Head to this former bank building on Broad Street for brasserie fare in a comfortable, speakeasy-style setting. The classics are on the menu—chilled oysters, onion soup, and steak frites—as well as elevated dishes, including the much-touted torchon de foie gras, coq au vin, and gnocchi Parisienne. *(DS) 1 Broad St., (843) 779-1800, brasserielabanque.com. $$$-$$$$; D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 Ⓥ

BURWELL'S STONEFIRE GRILL

This upmarket steak house offers prime cuts of meat cooked on a custom-built 1,400-degree, wood-fired grill or 700-degree lava stone, plus plenty of succulent shrimp, scallops, and crab cakes. And you must leave room for one of the decadent desserts. *(MS) 14 N. Market St., (843) 737-8700, burwellscharleston.com. $-$$$$; D.* 🌙 🍸 ♿ 🌳 Ⓟ

CAFECITO

Missing a proper cafecito (Cuban espresso) and Cubano sandwich, a couple of Miami transplants opened this spot featuring all manner of coffee drinks, pastries, and sandwiches. Don't miss the guava and cream cheese pastelito. *(ML) 471 King St., (843) 801-7277, cafecitoking.com. $; B, L.* ♿ 🐾

CALLIE'S HOT LITTLE BISCUIT

Pop into this cheerful counter-service cafe (which has another location in the City Market) for a variety of freshly baked biscuits, made with buttermilk and country ham, cinnamon, cheese, or chives. Or build biscuit sammies and bowls with an array of fillings. Bonus: there's a gluten-free option. *(MS) 476½ King St., (843) 737-5159, calliesbiscuits.com. $; B, L.* ♿

CAVIAR & BANANAS

This downtown spot provides endless possibilities for an easygoing lunch or breakfast on the run. The sophisticated sandwich and salad options and espresso bar add to the benefits. *(MS) 51 George St., (843) 577-7757, caviarandbananas.com. $-$$; B, L, Sat. & Sun. BR.* ♿ 🌳 🐾

CHEZ NOUS

At the petite Chez Nous, chef Jill Mathias offers diners an impressive wine list and picture-worthy seasonal French-inspired fare. (Flageolet beans with artichoke, lamb tartare, and coulette with potato gratin, for instance.) In fact, the only way to browse their daily changing menu in advance is via the restaurant's Instagram feed, where it's posted alongside photos of many elegantly composed dishes at this cozy Elliotborough gem. *(MS) 6 Payne Ct., (843) 579-3060, cheznouschs.com $$$-$$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

CHUBBY FISH

Chef James London's ever-changing menu is driven by the availability of the local catch. The raw bar and creative plates, such as smoked wahoo curry and chile garlic shrimp, are accompanied by a nightly whole fish offering with ginger and scallion. While seafood is the main story here, small plates like a delightful celery salad and the must-order charred lamb ribs with romesco also shine. *(MS) 252 Coming St., (854) 222-3949, chubbyfishcharleston.com. $$-$$$; D.* 🍸

CHURCH & UNION

This eatery set in a cavernous sanctuary brings a contemporary edge to Market Street. Standouts

charleston magazine (dining guide)

RESTAURANT SPOTLIGHT

BURWELL'S STONE FIRE GRILL

A nationally recognized modern steakhouse, 12 years in the Historic Market District, Burwell's proudly continues its unique approach to prime beef.

Downtown
14 N. Market Street
(843) 737-8700 | BurwellsCharleston.com

FRANNIE & THE FOX

A wood-burning concept influenced by Italian sensibilities paired with award-winning cocktails for the adventure-seeking, campfire-loving, culinary enthusiast in us all. Now open for lunch.

Downtown | 181 Church Street
(843) 577-2644 | HotelEmeline.com

HANK'S SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

Great food and ambiance come together at this local staple in a beautifully renovated turn-of-the-century warehouse overlooking the City Market.

Downtown
10 Hayne Street
(843) 723-3474 | HanksSeafoodRestaurant.com

HENRY'S ON THE MARKET

Inhabiting the corner of Anson and Market streets since 1932, this eclectic restaurant features live music, a rooftop deck, and a classic speakeasy bar.

Downtown
54 N. Market Street
(843) 723-4363 | HenrysOnTheMarket.com

KAMINSKY'S DESSERT CAFÉ

Indulge in the rotating selection of delights made in house daily, in addition to heaping milkshakes, specialty coffees, and cold beverage creations.

Downtown
78 N. Market Street
(843) 853-8270 | Kaminskys.com

LITTLE PALM

This breezy, poolside restaurant with a lively environment offers fresh, vibrant cocktails and seasonal, ingredient-driven dishes. Open for breakfast, brunch, lunch, dinner, and late-night drinks.

Downtown | 237 Meeting Street
(843) 414-8030 | LittlePalmBar.com

PEARLZ OYSTER BAR

Located in the heart of downtown Charleston, Pearlz specializes in serving only fresh and sustainable seafood in a casual dining atmosphere.

Downtown
153 East Bay Street
(843) 577-5755 | PearlzOysterBar.com

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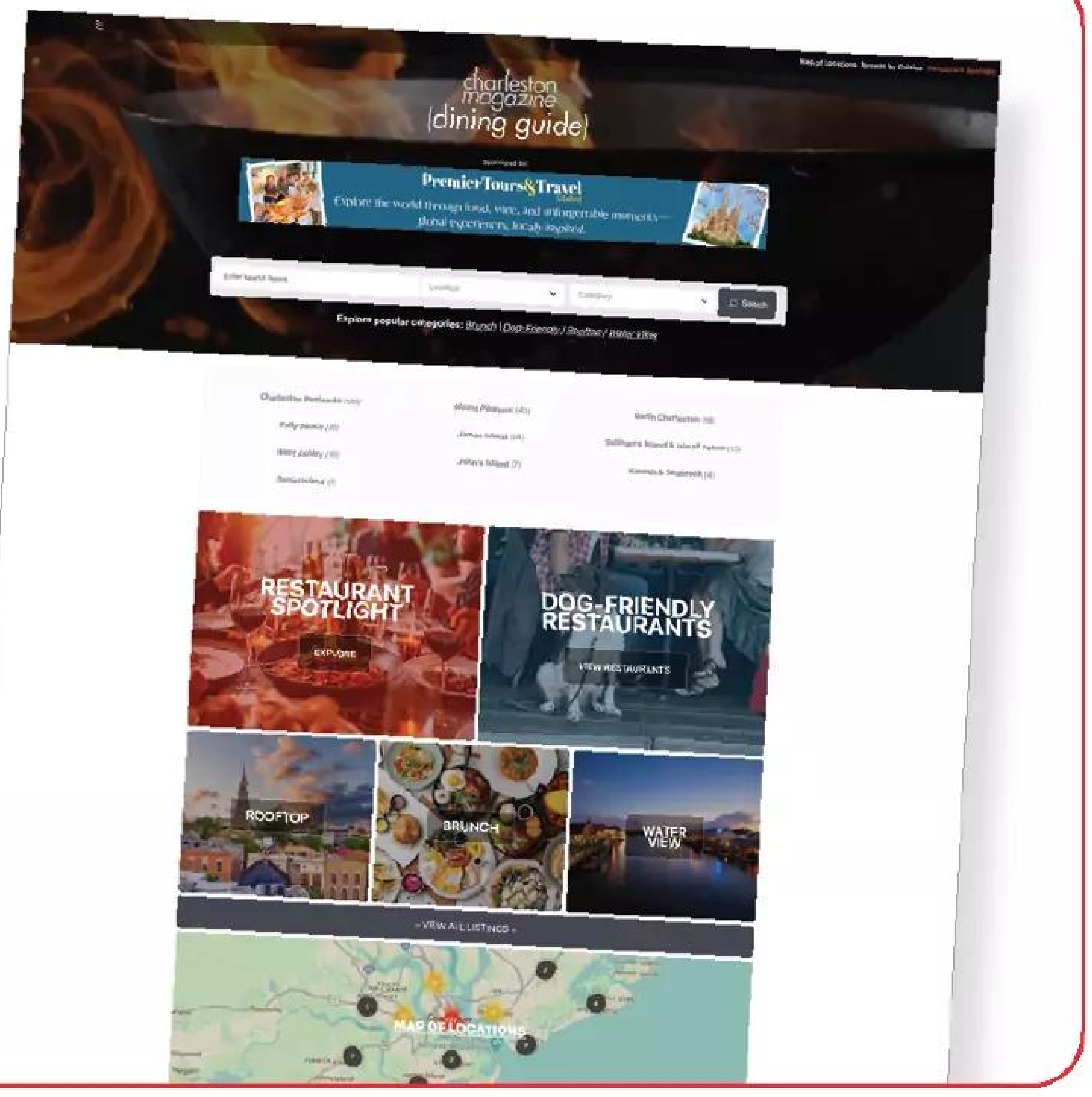

on chef Jamie Lynch's menu include the ahi tuna poke bowl with Carolina Gold rice, ravioli stuffed with Italian sausage, and daily fresh catch on a bed of Anson Mills farro. *(MS) 32 N. Market St., (843) 937-8666, 5churchcharleston.com. $$-$$$$; L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ 🐾

CIRCA 1886

In the carriage house of the Wentworth Mansion, longtime chef Marc Collins and his team offer two six-course tasting menus, as well as á la carte dishes, in the romantic Circa 1886. Think French technique applied to inventive flavor combinations, such as foie gras custard with matcha, pistachio, Parmesan, citrus, and berry mostarda, as well as creative confections from pastry chef Ashley Cardona. *(MS) 149 Wentworth St., (843) 853-7828, circa1886.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🐾

CITRUS CLUB

For panoramic views and tropical tipples, head to this pastel penthouse oasis. Expect to find a custom-built coral backbar and matching frozen drink machine, Marcona almond-dusted mai tais, plus beer and wine for the less adventurous. The savory ceviche tacos, crab salad, and smashburger are sure to assuage your hunger. *(MS) 334 Meeting St., (843) 872-9063, thedewberrycharleston.com. $$$-$$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳

COAST BAR & GRILL

Take an instant vacation in this high-style fish camp with a laid-back feel. While there's surf and turf, including pork loin and jerk half chicken, Coast is about seafood—roasted, grilled, fried, steamed, and on the half shell—from Baja fish tacos to spicy adobo shrimp with bacon cheese grits. *(MS) 39-D John St., (843) 722-8838, holycityhospitality.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 ☾ 🐾

CONTAINER BAR

This North Central bar was cleverly crafted from three shipping containers and hosts a variety of food trucks, with lineups updated daily online. Happenings include trivia nights and plenty of televised sports. *(MS) 2130 Mount Pleasant St., (843) 793-1480, containerbarchs.com. $-$$; D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 ☾ Ⓟ 🐾

COSTA

Bookended by an elegant bar and the high-energy open kitchen, Costa is glamorous and sweeping. Offerings are restrained and tightly curated. Billed as Italian-inspired seafood, the menu kicks off with crudo plates, including a bright and briny scallop with passionfruit, avocado, and finger lime. Still, terrestrial dishes, like the ever-so-thin-and-crispy pork Milanese, are every bit as solid. *(ML) 320 Broad St. (843) 969-2555, costacharleston.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓥ

THE DAILY

This Upper King cafe serves up Onyx coffee in all forms—from cold brew to cortado—plus smoothies, bowls, and fancy toasts. Artisan breads, pastries, sandwiches, and salads are ready to eat in or grab to go. Find local produce, dairy, and specialty items as well. *(MS) 652-B King St., (843) 619-0151, shopthedaily.com. $-$$; B, L.* ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

D'ALLESANDRO'S PIZZA

Learning from their father, Nick and Ben D'Allesandro serve what they know best: hand-tossed pizza. The parlor in Cannonborough-Elliotborough has staked a claim as a favorite among CofC students and other neighborhood residents. *(MS) 229 St. Philip St., (843) 853-6337, dalspizza.com. $-$$; L, D.* ♿ ☾

DA TOSCANO PORCHETTA SHOP

Le Farfalle owners Kaitlin and Michael Toscano opened this corner shop in 2023. At lunchtime, patrons line up for heavenly house-made focaccia sandwiches stuffed with locally raised pork, beef cheek, mortadella, or marinated eggplant. Early birds come in the morning for a slice of olive oil cake, a 24-Karat Muffin, or a breakfast sandwich like no other (think: sunny-side up egg, porchetta, crackling, provolone, and salsa verde). *(ML) 109 President St., dtporchetta.shop. $-$$; B, L.* ♿

THE DARLING OYSTER BAR

Diners dig this casual spot on Upper King for its versatile seafaring menu. Bivalve lovers savor the raw bar filled with "merroir" subtleties. Dinner brings clam strips, crab cakes, and fry baskets, but also fried chicken. Don't miss the crab cake benedict and seafood frittata at brunch. *(MS) 513 King St., (843) 641-0821, thedarling.com. $$$-$$$$; D & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿

DELANEY OYSTER HOUSE

A historical single across from Marion Square houses this chic, seafood-centric restaurant. Try dishes such as the grilled Spanish octopus or spicy snapper ceviche with chile crisp and puffed rice. More traditional but equally delicious are the crispy fish or oyster platter and the shrimp roll sourced straight off the trawlers at Tarvin Seafood. Hit happy hour for a great deal on shucker select oysters. *(MS) 115 Calhoun St., (843) 594-0099, delaneyoysterhouse.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* ♿ 🍸 Ⓟ

DOAR BROS.

This petite Meeting Street bar offers a selection of palate-teasing bites, but cocktails shine brightest. Snacks include tufts of burrata, marinated Spanish mussels, and caviar service. Doar Bros. is perfect for a predinner cocktail, an affogato for dessert, or a Negroni nightcap. *(MS) 225 Meeting St., doarbros.com. $-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ ☾ 🌳

EDMUND'S OAST RESTAURANT & BREWPUB

With a wide daily selection of their own beers on tap, you're sure to find your fancy. On the food side, executive chef Bob Cook serves up his famous cheeseburgers, charcuterie boards, and fried chicken in five flavors, ranging from the OG to Korean style. Globally influenced entrees include a Vietnamese-style swordfish with field greens, as well as red curried vegetables. *(MS) 1081 Morrison Dr., (843) 727-1145, edmundsoast.com. $$-$$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 Ⓟ 🐾

EDMUND'S OAST BREWING CO.

Don't expect a carbon copy of Edmund's Oast here; EOBC, at the Pacific Box & Crate development, is more playful. The best dishes are the messiest; try the homemade hot dog with chili and slaw or the wood-fired pizza drizzled with hot honey. *(MS) 1505 King St., (843) 718-3224, edmundsoast.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 🌳 Ⓟ 🐾

EL PINCHO TACO

This Mexican eatery offers dishes you're not likely to find elsewhere, such as burritos filled with campechano (carne asada and crumbly, unctuous chorizo sausage), huaraches (crisp masa filled with refried beans), or cochinita pibil (Yucatan-style pork, slow-roasted in banana leaves). *(MS) 616-B Meeting St., (843) 406-5958. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 Ⓟ 🐾

ÉLEVÉ

At the Grand Bohemian Hotel's rooftop restaurant and bar, you're looking at the stars. Arrive in time for happy hour, sit in the airy dining room, and sample the charcuterie, carpaccio, or a Southern Caesar with its corn-bread croutons and Comte cheese. Or dine on what may be the fanciest shrimp and grits in town. *(MS) 55 Wentworth St., (843) 724-4144, kesslercollection.com/eleve-restaurant. $$$$; L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓥ ☾

THE ESTABLISHMENT

Located in Broad Street's historic James Gregorie House, this restaurant specializes in polished small plates and larger mains that vary by the evening. Seafood takes the lead, with artfully prepared cuts of fish accompanied by bright, seasonal veggies. *(MS) 28 Broad St., (843) 789-4028, establishmentchs.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓥ

ESTADIO

At this Spring Street Spanish spot, the ambience matches the fare. Lively interpretations of tapas, paellas, and Spanish tortillas make Estadio worthy of repeat visits, as do its sherry and vermouth selection, and outstanding gin and tonic program. Standing at the communal table, snacking on manchego and olives, drink in hand, is all part of the fun. *(MS) 122 Spring St. (843) 793-1029, estadio-chs.com. $$-$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿

FÉLIX COCKTAILS & CUISINE

A brasserie with Parisian flavor, Félix brings French standards to King Street. Expect onion soup, salade Lyonnaise, croque madame, and steak frites, but enjoy surprises like deviled eggs with lobster and a delightful caramelized onion-topped burger. *(MS) 550 King St., (843) 203-6297, felixchs.com. $$-$$$; L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ ☂ Ⓟ ☾

FIG

FIG's busy bar and welcoming dining room keep the focus squarely on the food and drink (the wine program was named most outstanding in the country in 2018 by the James Beard Foundation). The menu is a daily improvisation based on the freshest ingredients from local purveyors. Start with chicken liver pâté, a tradition and one of the few dishes that stays on the menu, and end with the Rare Wine Company's Madeira, a tribute to Lowcountry history. Reservations are a must for the dining room, but walk-ins occasionally find luck at the bar. *(MS) 232 Meeting St., (843) 805-5900, eatatfig.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿

FLEET LANDING

Located on Charleston Harbor, this beloved seafood spot serves up Southern classics with a twist. Fleet's bar, deck, and harbor views make it a favorite for the happy hour cocktail crowd—and the perfect place to enjoy the fresh catch, roasted, grilled, or fried. The raw bar is one of the few places in town to enjoy oysters on the half shell with a water view. *(MS) 186 Concord St., (843) 722-8100, fleetlanding.net. $$$; L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ ☂

FRANNIE & THE FOX

With a cozy-yet-modern vibe and a courtyard reminiscent of an Italian piazza, this hot spot in the hotel Emeline has locals revisiting the City Market area in droves. With a focus on wood-fired, shareable dishes, executive chef Daniel Dalton fills the menu with balanced, approachable, seasonal fare. The pizzas boast perfectly chewy crusts, local farms supply the fresh veggies, and the blue crab fritters really do demand those puppies "hush." *(SB) 181 Church St., (843) 414-1673, hotelemeline.com. $$$$; B, L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ ☂ 🐾

GABRIELLE

The menu at Hotel Bennett's main dining room is inspired by executive chef Edgar Kano's Japanese heritage and Mexican upbringing. A bigeye tuna tiradito (Peruvian sashimi) is dressed in a kombu-chile ponzu, and seared golden tilefish is served with a lemon beurre blanc and shaved fennel. Other winning plates include the chorizo mussels and Wagyu lettuce wraps with a smoky salsa. *(ML) 404 King St., (843) 410-0513, hotelbennett.com. $$$$; B, L, D.* ♿ Ⓟ ☂ 🐾

GAULART & MALICLET

With its community counter and straightforward menu featuring escargot, pâté plates, and simple entrees—always with a vegetarian option—G&M

charleston magazine
(dining guide)

RESTAURANT SPOTLIGHT

PEARLZ OYSTER BAR

Set in West Ashley's trendy Avondale neighborhood, Pearlz is committed to serving only the best seafood South Carolina has to offer.

West Ashley
9 Magnolia Road
(843) 573-2277 | PearlzOysterBar.com

TACO BOY

Find scratch-made tacos and Mexican-inspired dishes, as well as margaritas and craft cocktails, perfect for enjoying on the sunny, pet-friendly patio.

Downtown
217 Huger Street
(843) 789-3333 | TacoBoy.net

TACO BOY

This vibrant three-story hideaway, located just a block off the beach, boasts a main-level dining room, patio deck, and "Octopus bar" for groups of all sizes.

Folly Beach | 106 E. Ashley Avenue
(843) 588-9761 | TacoBoy.net

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(aka Fast & French) provides a true bistro experience where suited business folk squeeze in with artsy types to make one happy family. *(MS) 98 Broad St., (843) 577-9797, fastandfrenchcharleston.com. $$-$$$; B, L, D.* ♿ 🐾

GRILL 225

The swanky spot in the lobby of the Market Pavilion Hotel serves high-end lobster, chops, and steaks (read: fat filets, thick strips, and 16-ounce rib eyes). The booths are luxurious, the wine list robust, and the service impeccable. *(MS) 225 East Bay St., (843) 266-4222, marketpavilion.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓥ

{DECEMBER 6, 7, 13, 14, & 18-23} HOTEL BENNETT TEA WITH SANTA

Head to Camellias in Hotel Bennett for this elevated holiday tea geared toward little ones and their parents. In addition to delectable treats and a selection of beverages (including champagne for grown-up guests), Santa himself will make an appearance. Swing by the lobby to see the hotel's iconic life-size gingerbread house crafted by French pastry chef Rémy Fünfrock. *Hotel Bennett, 404 King St. Days & times vary. Starting at $98-$68. (833) 313-1798, hotelbennett.com*

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF HOTEL BENNETT

THE GROCERY

Chef-owner Kevin Johnson's menu celebrates local producers year-round in a handsome Cannonborough space steps off King Street. The menu—categorized into produce, seafood, and meat—includes an incredible perloo of Charleston Gold rice and field peas with clams, shrimp, and crispy fish. A house pickling program also highlights Johnson's culinary focus. *(MS) 4 Cannon St., (843) 302-8825, thegroceycharleston.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ

HALLS CHOPHOUSE

Savor old-school style and flavor at this upscale institution on Upper King. Grab a stool at the bar, or head upstairs for a more intimate dining experience. Either way, you'll be indulging in top-drawer cuisine, such as lump crab cakes, lobster and bacon mac and cheese, and prime Allen Brothers steaks. *(MS) 434 King St., (843) 727-0090, hallschophouse.com. $$$$; D, Sat & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ ☾

HANDY & HOT

This pocket-sized eatery from celebrity chef Vivian Howard serves up tasty biscuits with fillings like berries and brie and savory hand pies, including apple and sweet potato samosa, plus Second State coffee drinks, kombucha, wine, and beer. *(DS) 68 Wentworth St., (843) 534-9032, handyandhot.com. $; B, L.* ♿ 🐾

HANK'S SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

Built to convey the style of a classic Charleston fish house, Hank's serves seafood ranging from raw bar selections to sautéed or grilled fish served with sauces that turn it into from-scratch specialties. It's the place for oyster stew and the chance to taste the city's past in the dish Seafood á la Wando. *(MS) 10 Hayne St., (843) 723-3474, hanksseafoodrestaurant.com. $$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿

HANNIBAL'S KITCHEN

The simple but satisfying crab and shrimp rice has a dedicated following at this family-owned soul food spot on Charleston's Eastside. *(DS) 16 Blake St., (843) 722-2256, hannibalkitchen.com. $; L, D.* 🌳

HENRY'S AT THE MARKET

Opened in 1932, Henry's is touted as the oldest restaurant in the city. Stop in after a day of shopping at City Market for seafood standards, such as she-crab soup and jambalaya, and stay for the live music and a classic cocktail in the rooftop bar. *(ML) 54 N. Market St., (843) 723-4363, henrysonthemarket.com. $$; L, D.* 🌳 🍸 ♿ ☾ 🐾

HERD PROVISIONS

This Wagener Terrace retail butcher shop and restaurant showcases proteins from Leaping Waters Farm, where heritage cattle and pigs roam on owner Alec Bradford's pasture. Vibrant salads and sides offer balance to the meat-heavy mains—hearty as one might expect—as do vegetarian dishes and pan-seared local fish. *(MS) 106 Grove St., (843) 637-4145, herdprovisions.com. $$$-$$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

HIGH COTTON

This handsome restaurant has a posh bar and a dining room reminiscent of a members-only clubhouse. Smoked brie-baked oysters and she-crab soup accent a classic offering of steaks and seafood. Don't miss the brioche French toast at brunch. *(MS) 199 East Bay St., (843) 724-3815, highcottoncharleston.com. $$$$; D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿

HOKKAIDO SUSHI & HIBACHI

Decor is low-frills, but the fare is on point at this sushi spot. Start with one of the hand rolls that satisfies both elaborate and simple cravings, or the hibachi entrees for those drawn to warmer fare. Green tea ice cream makes for a cool finish. *(MS) 99 Westedge St., Suite 1600, (843) 501-7296, hokkaidocharleston.com. $-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

HOME TEAM BBQ

Fans who have visited this local chain's West Ashley or Sullivan's Island locations can hit up the restaurant's third home on Williman Street. There, a bigger footprint enables Home Team to serve an expanded menu of meats, tacos, boards, and creative cocktails. *(MS) 126 Williman St., (843) 225-7427, hometeambbq.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ ☾ 🌳 🐾

HUSK

Chef Rick Ohlemacher brings reverence for regional purveyors to his role helming this esteemed kitchen. He plays ingredients off each other in rotating dishes like porchetta with sofrito-braised beans and fennel (a heavenly take on Southern pork and beans) and diver scallops seared in brown butter. *(ML) 76 Queen St., (843) 577-2500, huskrestaurant.com. $$$$; D. Sat & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿

INDACO

It's all about tradition at this Upper King restaurant. With mains such as wood-fired pizzas, rich pastas, and truffles when in season, Indaco delivers Italian fare in a sleek space. And the craft cocktail program is perfect for happy hour on the side patio. *(MS) 526 King St., (843) 727-1228, indacorestaurant.com. $$-$$$; D, Sat & Sun. BR.* 🍸 🌳

ISLAND PROVISIONS

A downtown outpost of the John's Island OG, this sunny all-day cafe and market beckons customers to grab a breakfast sandwich and coffee to go or linger over, say, mustard and tarragon chicken salad on a croissant and a mango smoothie spiked with ginger and tumeric. Come 3 p.m., the menu shifts to suppertime snacks like toast topped with smoked trout and dill crème fraîche. *(ML) 221 St. Philip St., (843) 718-0812, islandprovisions.com. $-$$; B, L, D, Sat & Sun. BR.* 🌳 🍸 ♿ 🐾

THE ITALIAN BOY AFTER DARK

In late 2024, The Pass chef-owner Anthony Marini introduced this reservation-only restaurant-within-a-restaurant concept to his Cannonborough-Elliotborough sandwich shop, offering a 12-seat family-style tasting menu Wednesday through Saturday nights. Reserve a perch at the bar to watch prix-fixe plates be prepared, ranging from rotating antipasti and crudo to Marini's famous panini imbottiti. *(DS) 207-A St. Philip St. theitalianboychs.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿

KAMINSKY'S DESSERT CAFÉ

With a rotating selection of classic desserts made in-house daily, Kaminsky's is the perfect spot to grab a late afternoon coffee and slice of chocolate torte or post-dinner dessert martini, like the key lime pie, made with Licor 43, lime juice, and a graham cracker rim. *(ML) 78 N. Market St. (843) 853-8270, kaminskys.com. $-$$.* 🍸 ☾ ♿

KULTURA

After a recent move to new digs, chef Nikko Cagalanan continues to deliver elevated Filipino dishes such as adobong dilaw, a sticky rice creation laden with tender braised duck leg, as well as the Jollybee (pork and mushroom ragu) and roasted red snapper curry. Try the decadent buko pie, topped with whipped coconut cream and served on a flaky bed of puff pastry, for dessert. *(ML) 267 Rutledge Ave. (843) 974-1674, kulturacharleston.com. $$-$$$$; D.* ♿ 🌳

LA CAVE

Envisioned as a spot for diners to wait for tables at sister restaurant Félix Cocktails et Cuisine next door, this Upper King Street boîte opened late last year and has since taken on a life of its own. La Cave offers an urbane countryside interior, an impressive all-French wine list, and not-so-petite small plates ranging from duck confit gnocchi to a rich bouillabaisse with little neck clams. *(ML) 550 King St. lacavechs.com. $-$$$; D.* 🍸 ☾ ♿

LE FARFALLE

Michael Toscano's Italian osteria offers up memorable meals with stellar dishes from start (octopus carpaccio or fried calamari) to finish (tiramisu). His excellent house-made pasta—the duck confit agnolotti is heavenly—makes for an outstanding *secondi*, so save room. Even the warm rosemary focaccia with whipped ricotta is a delight. *(MS) 15 Beaufain St., (843) 212-0920, lefarfallecharleston.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳

LEGAMI

With Italian-born chef Andrea Congiusto helming the kitchen, this airy King Street eatery opened last fall with a focus on new Italian cuisine. The pappardelle in a braised oxtail ragu would impress any nonna, while the drink list offers riffs on classic cocktails, such as the vodka-based Amuse Me, a refined oyster shooter made with white balsamic, pepper, and prosecco. *(ML) 492 King St. (843) 203-4869, legamichs.com. $$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ☾ 🍸 ♿ 🌳

LENOIR

Vivian Howard's eatery may be located in a hotel and named for her North Carolina home county, but it feels like a neighborhood spot. Patty melts, roasted tomato pie, and sticky-sweet blueberry barbecue wings grace the menu; and the cocktail list is fresh and fruit-forward—try the blood orange and mezcal Above Your Raisin. *(SB) 68 Wentworth St., (843) 534-9031, dineatlenoir.com. $$$-$$$$; L, D, Sat & Sun. BR.* 🍸 Ⓟ ♿

LEON'S FINE POULTRY & OYSTER SHOP

Housed in a former auto shop on Upper King Street, this retro restaurant ranks high as an ideal neighborhood hangout. There's fried chicken, peel-and-eat shrimp, oyster rolls, and crab Louie salad, but don't miss the chargrilled oysters—they're a trademark. *(MS) 698 King St., (843) 531-6500, leonsoystershop.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 🌳 Ⓟ ♿ 🐾

LEWIS BARBECUE

This counter service-only restaurant stays packed with a long line of carnivores eagerly awaiting their fill of ribs, pulled pork, hot sausage, and smoked brisket (owner John Lewis's specialty). Just add a side of green chile corn pudding. *464 N. Nassau St., (843) 805-9500, lewisbarbecue.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

LEYLA

Baba ghannouj, grape leaves, falafel, and all manner of grilled meats—find Middle-Eastern standards and more at this family-run King Street restaurant. Lebanese wines and warm hospitality round out the experience. *(ML) 298 King St., (843) 501-7500, leyla-charleston.com. $$-$$$; D, Sat. BR.* 🍸 ♿

LILLAN'S PETITE MARKET & EATERY

Inspired by its predecessor Harold's Cabin, this all-day spot aims to be a community hub, where you can grab a coffee and croissant in the morning, pick up a carton of local eggs and a bottle of natural wine, and return in the evening for the catch du jour and a glass of rose on the rooftop. It's also a worthy stop for lunch and brunch when the bacon-infused West Side burger shines. *(ML) 247 Congress St. (843) 203-6698, lillianschs.com. $$-$$$; B, L, D, BR.* 🍸 🌳

LITTLE JACK'S TAVERN

Extensive research resulted in this American tavern and a dining experience that feels timeless, with fare that includes crudites, chopped salad, crab cakes, and the crown jewel: the Tavern Burger. *(MS) 710 King St., (843) 531-6868, littlejackstavern.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 Ⓥ 🐾

LITTLE LINE KITCHEN & PROVISIONS

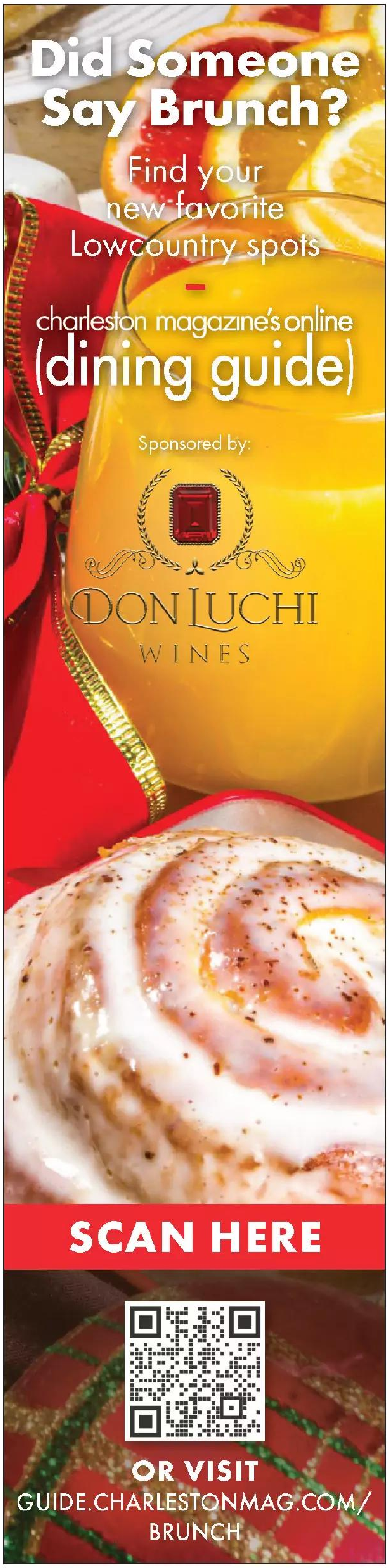
An all-day menu focuses on breakfast sandwiches and bagels imported from Brooklyn. Come the weekend, the menu expands for a more leisurely pace with specials like the kimchi fried rice bowl with farm eggs, sticky buns, buttermilk biscuits, and omelets. For lunch or supper on Thursdays and Fridays, try the fried chicken sandwich on brioche. *(SB) 176 Line St., (843) 640-3057, littlelinechs.com. $-$$; B, L, (Thurs. & Fri D). Sat & Sun BR.* ♿ 🐾

LITTLE PALM

Located in downtown's boutique Ryder Hotel, this breezy daytime cafe turns into a lively cocktail bar when the sun goes down. Enjoy coastal-inspired bites, all-day Sunday brunch, or nightcaps that nod to travel, like the "Late Checkout" made with smoked peach and strawberry soda. *(HR) 237 Meeting St., (843) 414-8030, littlepalmbar.com. $-$$$; B, L, D, & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ☾ ♿ 🌳 Ⓥ 🐾

LOWLAND

Housed in the historic Lequeux-Williams House on George Street, the concept is divided between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a lively tavern on the ground floor and a more upscale dining room on the second. Classics are elevated with technique and standout ingredients sourced from regional purveyors, like the hand-chopped beef tartare and 24-hour short rib topped with chimichurri. *(ML) 36 George St., (843) 895-4137, lowlandcharleston.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿

MA'AM SAAB

Dishes arrive in pretty copper vessels at this lively Pakistani spot, encouraging sharing. Savory starters like the aubergine pakora chaat—eggplant fritters with pomegranate seeds and mint chutney—compliment the bar's imaginative cocktails. Main plates range from a flavorful rendition of butter chicken to charsi karahi, a succulent stew of goat, tomatoes, and ginger. *(ML) 251 Meeting St., (843) 259-2660; maamsaabchs.com. $$$-$$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿

MAGNOLIAS

Magnolias has been serving its "Uptown/Down South Cuisine" since 1990. Its Lowcountry fine-dining fare includes cornmeal-fried catfish, shrimp and scallops over creamy grits, and pan-fried chicken livers. *(MS) 185 East Bay St., (843) 577-7771, magnoliascharleston.com. $$$$; L, D, Sun. BR.* 🍸 Ⓟ

MAISON

Rustic charm and modern lines define this chic little French bistro. Here, classics go contemporary, as with the everything-spiced salmon rillette, monkfish with brown butter sauce, or onion soup croquette. The elegant wine list and quaffable cocktails pair perfectly with the rich menu. *(MS) 708 King St., (843) 990-9165, maisoncharleston.com. $$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

MALAGÓN MERCADO Y TAPERIA

Chef Juan Casselett's spirited menu ventures beyond conventional tapas offerings and is accompanied by a list of Spanish beer and wines. Peruse the charming market wall stocked with imported specialty products from Spain. Reservations are a must, even for the bar. *(MS) 33 Spring St., (843) 926-0475, malagonchs.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

MARBLED & FIN

The latest venture from Neighborhood Dining Group has breathed new life into the steak house concept with this airy, contemporary space. Executive chef Eucepe Puntriano indulges in every extravagance, offering a Wagyu rib eye ladled with truffle butter and a pairing of broiled oysters with bone marrow. A solid list of evocative cocktails rounds out the menu, with sumptuous desserts to follow. *(ML) 480 East Bay St., (843) 278-5488, marbledandfin.com. $$$$; D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ☾

MARIO'S ITALIAN RISTORANTE

A family-run, red-sauce joint that's mercifully open late, here's where to satisfy cravings for classic Italian-American fare, from calamari to carbonara. The house salad is a winner, too, as is the espresso martini. *(ML) 487 King St., (843) 641-0441, mariosristorante2.com. $$-$$$; D.* 🍸 ☾ ♿

MARINA VARIETY STORE

A killer view of the Ashley River and hit-the-spot breakfasts, lunches, and seafood dinners (featuring satisfying shrimp platters, fried clam strips, and crab dip) make this beach-town joint a favorite among boaters, visitors, and business folks alike. *(MS) 9 Lockwood Dr., (843) 723-6325, varietystorerestaurant.com. $$-$$$; B, L, D, Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ

MEETING AT MARKET

Charleston Place may not have previously come to mind when choosing a spot to grab beers, upscale pub snacks, burgers, or even a Cobb salad while watching the game, but that changed with this highbrow sports bar overlooking the City Market. *(MS) 120 Market St., (843) 875-5252, charlestonplace.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ ☾

MELFI'S

This classy little Italian restaurant caters to adult diners (i.e, it's not your children's pizza place). Melfi's specializes in simple pasta and creative thin-crusted pies like The Mr. Wally, topped with salami, mushrooms, pickled fresno peppers, and mozz. Love osso bucco? Find your veal shanks here. *(MS) 721 King St., (843) 513-0307, eatatmelfis.com. $$-$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

MERCANTILE & MASH

On the Mercantile side at this Cigar Factory joint, diners can nosh on all-day breakfast or settle in for soup, a sandwich, or a burger. Bonus: there's a separate menu for the kids. At Mash, patrons hang till 11 p.m. for the American whiskey list and bar bites. *(MS) 701 East Bay St., (843) 793-2636, mercandmash.com. $-$$; B, L.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 Ⓟ 🐾

MERCI

The couple behind event firm The Drifter delivers a tightly curated menu of French-throwback-meets-Italian-rustic dishes at this cozy Harleston Village spot. Within its petite footprint with only 26 seats, the atmosphere feels like a dinner party, complete with a selection of French wines, eclectic dinnerware, and chef Michael Zentner's irresistible focaccia, stuffed with stracciatella, Benton's ham, and pistachios with a drizzle of hot fermented honey. *(MS) 28 Pitt St. (854) 200-4407, mercichs.com. $$-$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿

MILLERS ALL DAY

Both sweet and savory devotees will find dishes that hit the spot: waffles drizzled with sorghum syrup, the daily grit bowl, or the bacon-egg-and-cheese sandwich served on an everything brioche bun. *(MS) 120 King St., (843) 501-7342, millersallday.com. $$-$$$; B, L, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿

MOE'S CROSSTOWN TAVERN

Barflies won't want for great food when they hit this no-frills spot near Hampton Park. With a fat menu—the burgers are all winners—plus happy hour snacks and drink specials, this tavern is a local favorite. *(MB) 714 Rutledge Ave., (843) 641-0469, moescrosstowntavern.com. $$; L, D.* 🍸 ☾ ♿

MUSE

Occupying a charming Italianate single house, this restaurant and wine bar serves up Mediterranean cuisine, combining pasta, dates, and Eastern spices with seafood and meats, creating a happy harmony of flavors. Plus, you can count on a handful of Italian standbys: carbonara, tagliatelle Bolognese, and veal scaloppini. *(MS) 82 Society St., (843) 577-1102, charlestonmuse.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🐾

OAK STEAKHOUSE

If you're craving a tender filet or prime New York strip, head to this Broad Street mainstay. Oak serves Certified Angus Beef, so the super-hungry will salivate over the 16-ounce rib eye. Lighter eaters will want to try the carpaccio or lobster mac and cheese. *(MS) 17 Broad St., (843) 722-4220, oaksteakhouserestaurant.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿

O-KU

This stylish spot is a high-end sushi and sake staple. Hand rolls include butter-poached lobster with asparagus, and there's a nigiri offering of seared Wagyu with bulgogi sauce and caviar. Don't miss the dumplings and pork buns. *(MS) 463 King St., (843) 737-0112, o-kusushi.com. $$-$$$; D.* 🍸 ☾ Ⓥ

THE ORDINARY

This oyster hall, built in a 1927 bank, features an ever-evolving seafood menu from chef-owner Mike Lata that includes an American caviar service and an array of mains. Go for the crispy oyster sliders; stay for the showstopping seafood tower that offers a variety of oysters, shrimp, and clams. *(MS) 544 King St., (843) 414-7060, eattheordinary.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 🌳

PALMETTO CAFE

Come lunchtime, shoppers can rest at this cafe on the ground floor of The Charleston Place hotel, where the crab salad or seafood club fuels them for more power shopping. There's a trendy breakfast menu, plus appealing offerings for those under 12. *(MS) 205 Meeting St., charlestonplace.com., (843) 875-5248, $$$-$$$$; B, L.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🐾

PARK & GROVE

This neighborhood fave focuses on seasonally inspired dinner fare and cocktails, but serves a

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standout lunch menu and a leisurely brunch on weekends. Try the braised short rib grilled cheese or a rich risotto topped with seasonal fish and heirloom tomatoes. *(ML) 730 Rutledge Ave., (843) 410-1070, parkandgrovechs.com. $$$; L, D, Sat. & Sun BR.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 ☾ 🐾

PAVILION BAR

The view from the top of the upscale Market Pavilion Hotel near City Market can't be beat. The menu features eclectic appetizers, such as jumbo shrimp satays and duck confit nachos, but there's also a more traditional array of burgers, salads, and pizzas. *(MS) 225 East Bay St., (843) 723-0500, marketpavilion.com. $$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 Ⓥ ☾

PEARLZ OYSTER BAR

With the feel of an old-school raw bar, Pearlz offers seafood classics such as peel-and-eat shrimp and oysters Rockefeller on a menu headlined by bivalves. The offerings are rounded out by a selection of fresh catches, steaks, and burgers. *(MS) 153 East Bay St., (843) 577-5755, pearlz-oysterbar.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🐾

PELATO

Brooklyn-style, Italian-American fare awaits at this new trattoria opened by the Scotto family of New York restaurant fame. Swing by the nostalgic dining room for a menu of comforting, shareable plates such as chicken Parmigiana; flaky, golden potato croquettes; and an especially seductive Sunday Sauce. *(JA) 1085 Morrison Dr. (843) 936-1085, pelatorestaurant.com. $$-$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿

{DECEMBER 7} MERCANTILE & MASH CHARCUTERIE CLASS

Ready to crush the savory spread at your next dinner party? Head downtown to discover the delicious art of charcuterie and learn about different cuts of meats and cheeses, exploring complementary flavors and textures, as well as how to visually create a board that will impress your guests with expert presentation. Bonus: participants will take home their own board and a selection of ingredients to get started. *Mercantile & Mash, 701 East Bay St. Sunday, 4 p.m. $90. (843) 793-2636. mercandmash.com*

PENINSULA GRILL

Time has not changed the luxurious dining experience at Planters Inn. The champagne bar sets the tone with sweetbreads, foie gras, and caviar. The dining room delivers she-crab soup and every prime cut of steak. *(MS) 112 N. Market St., (843) 723-0700, peninsulagrill.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 🌳 ♿

PINK BELLIES

Chef-owner Thai Phi's eclectic Vietnamese menu includes bun cha gio (pork noodle salad), spicy lamb dumplings, and the beloved garlic noodles, as well as an In-N-Out "animal-style" double burger. Local brew and a slew of fun cocktails wash it down. Counter service ensures dishes, and diners, move quickly. *(ML) 595-1 King St., (843) 640-3132, eatpinkbellies.com. $$, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ

PINK CACTUS

An ode to Oaxaca, one of Mexico's gastronomic capitals, Pink Cactus offers several vibrant, savory salsas that embolden its tacos, quesadillas, enchiladas, tortas, and more. Pop by on Thursdays for birria tacos. *(JC) 100-A Spring St., (843) 764-9343, pinkcactuschs.com. $$; L, D.* 🍸 ☾ ♿ Ⓟ

POOGAN'S PORCH

Step back into Charleston history in this Victorian house built in 1891 with porch dining on two floors. Biscuits and gravy and a fried chicken breast with waffles and sorghum butter star on the brunch menu. Dinner is all Southern all the time, with pimiento cheese fritters and chicken-fried pork chops. *(MS) 72 Queen St., (843) 829-4332, pooganspporch.com. $$-$$$; BR, D.* 🍸 🌳 🐾

POOGAN'S SMOKEHOUSE

Barbecue is the focus at this East Bay spot (a sibling of Poogan's Porch). The offerings include pulled pork, ribs, smoked brisket, and smoked sausage, along with a slew of Southern sides, such as collards and mac and cheese with country ham. *(MS) 188 East Bay St., (843) 577-5665, poogansssmokehouse.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 🐾

PROHIBITION

With live music and DJs on the regular, this jazz-age boite is always hopping. Cocktail enthusiasts will find plenty of well-executed classics to choose from, as well as fun twists like the gin-based cherry sour. The food menu keeps it real with Southern-inspired dishes sourced locally when possible. *(ML) 547 King St., (843) 459-7214, prohibitioncharleston.com. $$- $$$; D, Sat. & Sun BR.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 ☾ 🐾

RANCHO LEWIS

Pitmaster John Lewis's second local spot finds inspiration from the Northern Rio Grande Valley, in both its cowboy-inspired decor and ingredients. Highlights include cheesey grilled tacos, tortilla-crusted grouper, and Hatch chile cheeseburgers. Try a host of cocktails such as the tequila-laden Rattlesnake Milk and margaritas swirled with mango or Hatch chiles. *(HR) 1503 King St., (843) 996-4500, rancholewis.com. $$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

RAPPAHANNOCK OYSTER BAR

Choose from Virginia-farmed half shells or a rotating selection of local clams and oysters at this Eastside spot with a 40-seat copper bar. Eats range from crunchy tempura sea beans to the tasty humble po' boy or a lovely local catch. *(MS) 701 East Bay St., (843) 576-4693, rroysters.com. $$$-$$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳

RENZO

It's all about natural wines and wood-fired pizzas—with specialty toppings like the piquillo pepper sauce, chorizo, and medjool dates on the Wrath of Kahan. But don't sleep on small plates such as the charred cauliflower and ricotta gnudi. *(MS) 384 Huger St., (843) 259-2760, renzochs.com. $$- $$$; D.* 🍸 ♿

REPUBLIC GARDEN & LOUNGE

In addition to a sizable cocktail list and bottle service, this King Street disco offers a lineup of solid food. Think onion rings, chicken wings, cheeseburgers, and big salads—plenty to keep any partier well fueled. *(MS) 462 King St., (843) 724-7400, republicreign.com. $$; D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ☾ ♿ 🌳

THE RESTAURANT AT ZERO GEORGE

Tucked in the courtyard of the posh Zero George Hotel, this petite eatery's patio feels like a secret garden. Chef Vinson Petrillo serves sophisticated dishes on a multicourse, modernist tasting menu. There is caviar service, curated wine and craft cocktail lists, and after dinner, nightcaps at the cozy bar. *(MS) 0 George St., (843) 822-4872, zerorestaurantcharleston.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 🌳

REVIVAL

At this sunlit restaurant in The Vendue, classics get a modern spin. Start with the chopped salad with roasted pimientos, artichokes, shaved red onion, and green olives, adapted from a 1904 World's Fair recipe. Fish or fowl to follow—and always an eight-ounce filet. *(AT) 162 East Bay St., (843) 414-2335, revivalcharleston.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ

RITUAL ROOFTOP RESTAURANT & LOUNGE

Inspired by Tulum, Mexico, Ritual is part eatery, part club, and all scene. Enjoy Tajin-dusted calamari with friends on the rooftop bar with killer views of Marion Square and the Ravenel Bridge. *(ML) 145 Calhoun St., Unit 301 (843) 410-1747, ritualchs.com. $-$$$; D. Sat. & Sun BR.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 ☾

R. KITCHEN

Reservations are hard to get at R. Kitchen, as it only seats up to 20 people. The menu changes daily, and you sit at the counter to experience all that the chef has to offer. Be sure to check out the West Ashley location, too. *(MS) 212 Rutledge Ave., (843) 789-0725, rutledgekitchen.com. $$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳

RODNEY SCOTT'S BBQ

Hailing from Hemingway, South Carolina, pitmaster Rodney Scott has stoked a far-reaching reputation as a barbecue virtuoso. Venture into all things porcine with a whole-hog plate or the

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE INDIGO ROAD HOSPITALITY GROUP

succulent ribs. Scott's cornmeal-crusted catfish filet is stellar, and the creamy banana pudding alone makes it worth paying a visit. *(MS) 1011 King St., (843) 990-9535, rodneyscottsbbq.com. $-$$$; L, D.* ♿ 🌳 Ⓟ 🐾

SANTI'S RESTAURANTE MEXICANO

At this festive Mexican spot, with additional locations in Mount Pleasant and West Ashley, enjoy a tasty margarita and guacamole before indulging in legit tacos, enchiladas, burritos, or chicken with mole. *(MS) 1302 Meeting Street Rd., (843) 722-2633, santisrestaurantemexicano.com. $$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 Ⓟ 🐾

THE SELECT

This brasserie serves up the standards you'd expect from a spot inspired by the original Le Select in 1920s Paris. There's quiche Lorraine, croque madame, and steak frites, as well as pasta primavera, shrimp and grits, and a classic burger—pleasing all manner of palates in a central downtown locale, no less. Go on Thursday evenings for live music and "ladies night" drink specials. *(ML) 465 Meeting St., Suite 120, (843) 278-5025; theselectcharleston.com. $$-$$$$; D, Sun.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 Ⓟ 🐾

SHIKI

Tucked just off East Bay Street, this hidden, family-run gem is known for pristine sashimi and creative rolls like the Super Crunch and Lemon Salmon. Chef Park brings New York-level precision to cuts like sake toro and scallop, while curated sake pairings and the wood-paneled sushi bar elevate the experience. For a splurge, try the omakase—but be sure to book ahead. *(DS) 334 East Bay St., (843) 720-8568; shikicharleston.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ

SLIGHTLY NORTH OF BROAD (SNOB)

This eclectic eatery in an 18th-century warehouse remains a local favorite after more than three decades of service. Shrimp and grits with house-made sausage and country ham and grilled tuna topped with fried oysters are standouts. *(MS) 192 East Bay St., (843) 723-3424, snobcharleston.com. $$$$; L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ 🐾

SORGHUM & SALT

At this farm-and-sea-to-table restaurant, simple dishes take the spotlight, such as short rib with sweet corn puree, black garlic, and shishito peppers. Bonus: a separate vegan menu with a number of offerings will please any diner. *(MS) 186 St. Philip St., (843) 872-6393, sorghumandsalt.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿

SORELLE

Sorelle emanates big-city opulence, with only-in-Charleston flair, like the view of the Four Corners of Law from the dining room. While

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house-made pasta, local fish, and lavish meat dishes anchor the offerings, the smaller plates, such as the vongole fra diavolo, generate the most excitement, especially when paired with a house Negroni. Also winners: handkerchief pasta with ragu and whipped lemon ricotta. *(ML) 88 Broad St. (843) 974-1575, sorellecharleston.com. $$$-$$$$; D, Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿

SOUTHBOUND

The hottest seats at this live-fire restaurant surround the oak-fed hearth and grill in the dining room, accented with white marble tables, burnished brass fixtures, and emerald Moroccan tile. Gems on the menu include the steak tartare served with smoked egg and grilled toast with miso butter, a dry-aged New York strip, and coal-roasted potatoes. *(HR) 72 Cannon St., (843) 823-0212, southboundchs.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

STELLA'S

Start your Greek feast with small plates such as the beef and lamb meatballs. Then, opt for the tasting platter of five dishes with souvlaki and spanakopita. The grilled psari (whole fish of the day) is a reliably pleasing main, as is the shrimp ouzo bucatini. *(MS) 114-A St. Philip St., (843) 400-0026, stellascharleston.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

SUSHI WA IZAKAYA

This Japanese mainstay from chef-owners Kazuyuki Murakami and Chris Schoedler offers a chef's counter for a traditional omakase experience. Select from local sashimi or a variety of nigiri, including flounder and fatty tuna. *(MS) 1503 King St. Ext. (843) 735-8633, sushiwacharleston.com. $$$$; D.* 🌙 Ⓟ

TABBULI

With a cozy outdoor courtyard, this is the perfect stop for a rum cocktail and some Middle Eastern fare. In addition to falafel, gyros, and baba ghanoush, the menu includes Greek and tahini-dressed salads. *(KG) 6 N. Market St., (843) 958-8500, tabbuli.com. $-$$; L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

TACO BOY

With the same festive feel as its Folly Beach sister—and a matching menu of tacos, quesadillas, queso, margaritas, and more—the downtown outpost offers indoor and outdoor spaces ideal for family dinners and happy hour revelers alike. *(MS) 217 Huger St., (843) 789-3333, tacoboy.net. $-$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 Ⓟ 🌙 🐾

TBONZ GILL & GRILL

Hungry folks shopping the City Market will do well to stop into TBonz. After fried pickles, a Certified Angus steak, or fried jumbo shrimp washed down with a couple of ice-cold drafts, you'll be happy you came. *(MS) 80 N. Market St., (843) 577-2511, tbonzgillandgrill.com. $$$-$$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿

TEMPEST

Located in a former Mariners' church, this Market Street spot aptly focuses on seafood, with offerings ranging from freshly harvested shellfish selections, both raw and charcoal-roasted, to entrees such as cacio e pepe and braised short ribs. *(DS) 32 N. Market St., (843) 996-4966, tempestcharleston.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 Ⓥ 🐾

TIMBER PIZZA CO NEW!

Step up to the counter at this Charleston outpost of the DC-based pizzeria for a bevy of wood-fired personal pies, from the classic margherita to creative combinations, such as The Lot with slow-roasted pork, bread-and-butter jalapenos, pineapple, and cilantro. Empanadas, inventive salads, and South Mountain Creamery desserts round out the offerings. *(DS) 741 Meeting St., (843) 735-5600, timberpizza.com. $$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

TWO BIT CLUB

Tucked inside the new Hotel Richemont, Two Bit Club brings bold, Southeast Asian flavors to Society Street, with Vietnamese staples—spring rolls, bánh mì, and pho—as well as a coconut-tamarind yellowtail ceviche and Happy Tiger steak. With lush interiors, a buzzy bar, and patio seating, it's an energetic spot in the heart of downtown. *(DS) 93 Society St. (854) 246-8012, twobitclub.com. $$-$$$$; L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🌙

VERN'S

With a rustic hearth, cozy tables, and glass doors that open onto the sidewalk, this sunny Cannonborough-Elliotborough corner feels more Left Bank than Holy City. Chef Daniel Heinze's menu is ingredient-driven, like yellowfin tuna in a crudo with Calabrian chile, bitter lettuces in a salad showered with garlicky bread crumbs, and a juicy pork loin crisped to perfection with creamy saffron mustard. *(ML) 41 Bogard St., (843) 509-4104, vernschs.com. $$$$; D.* ♿

VIRGINIA'S ON KING

At this home-cooking eatery, brunch is served daily from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., and there's salad and sandwiches for anyone who doesn't fancy pancakes for lunch. Supper starts at 3 p.m. sharp—think fried green tomatoes, she-crab soup, and homestyle meatloaf with mashed potatoes and gravy. *(MS) 412 King St., (843) 735-5800, holycityhospitality.com. $$$; B, L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿

VOLPE

Trattoria Lucca chef Ken Vedrinsk opened this Radcliffeborough restaurant to continue the spirit of his erstwhile eatery's family-style service. Volpe's ever-changing, prix fixe menu is packed with rustic dishes meant for sharing, like skate wing in brown butter vinaigrette or Marsala-style pork scallopini. *(ML) 161 Rutledge Ave. (843) 718-1390, volpecharleston.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿

THE WATCH ROOFTOP KITCHEN

Located on The Restoration hotel's rooftop, The Watch offers a splendid view of Charleston with your early breakfast. Later, indulge in boards of charcuterie and cheese or vegetables, burrata, and jam—and always the fresh catch. *(MS) 75 Wentworth St., (843) 518-5115, therestorationhotel.com. $$$-$$$$; B, L, D, Sun. BR.* 🍸 🌙 ♿ 🌳 🐾

WILD COMMON

Birdcage light fixtures and "living wallpaper" projections pair with a sumptuous tasting menu at this fine dining spot. Order the four-course menu or bring a group for the chef's table. *(MS) 103 Spring St., (843) 817-7311, wildcommoncharleston.com. $$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳

XIAO BAO BISCUIT

In this cheery repurposed gas station, don't miss the deep-fried sticky rice dumplings filled with carmelized pork or the okonomiyaki—a cabbage pancake topped with bacon, pork candy, a farm egg, or all three. *(MS) 224 Rutledge Ave., (843) 743-3880 xiaobaobiscuit.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* ♿ 🌳 🍸 Ⓟ 🐾

XO BRASSERIE

Smooth service, innovative cocktails, and a menu full of modern takes on Cantonese and Sichuan standards make this spot a welcome addition to the NoMo neighborhood. Check out the miso-marinated daily catch and rangoon dumplings stuffed with blue crab, provolone, ricotta, and duck sauce. *(ML) 1090 Morrison Dr., (843) 969-1896, xobchs.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* ♿ 🍸 Ⓟ

DANIEL ISLAND

THE KINGSTIDE

Drive or boat to The Kingstide, Daniel Island's only waterfront restaurant with first- and second-floor outdoor tables with a beautiful view overlooking the Wando River. Its casual, seafood-centric menu leans toward local catches, with a flat-iron steak for the determined landlubber. *(MS) 32 River Landing Dr., (843) 216-3832, thekingstide.com. $$$-$$$$; D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

WEST ASHLEY

BOXCAR BETTY'S

This spot is all about the chicken sandwich, fried or grilled. Don't miss the Box Car—slathered in pimiento cheese, peach slaw, spicy mayo, and house-made pickles. There are tenders for kids, and vegetarians love the pimiento cheese-stuffed portobello. *(MS) 1922 Savannah Hwy., (843) 225-7470, boxcarbettys.com. $-$$; L, D.* ♿ Ⓟ 🌳

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GENE'S HAUFBRAU

Pub-goers revel in Avondale's neighborhood tavern with its lineup of beer, burgers, and hearty sandwiches. More than meets the eye, this place is sports-lovers central with darts, pool, shuffleboard, and a blue-plate special every night. *(MS) 817 Savannah Hwy., (843) 225-4363. $; L, D, Sun. BR.* ☾ ♿ Ⓟ

GLASS ONION

Chef Chris Stewart uses all-natural meats and local seafood and vegetables for his daily-changing Southern menu in this no-frills, family friendly neighborhood favorite. The buttermilk-fried South Carolina quail, braised pork belly, or shrimp po' boy will have you thinking your meal can't get much better—until you dig into the bread pudding with whiskey sauce or blueberry panna cotta. *(MS) 1219 Savannah Hwy., (843) 225-1717, ilovetheglassonion.com. $$-$$$; B, L, D.* ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

{DECEMBER 7}
DRAYTON HALL OYSTER ROAST

Ring in the holiday season the Lowcountry way at beautiful Drayton Hall, an 18th-century estate along the Ashley River. Enjoy all-you-can-eat roasted oysters, a chili bar, and a wide selection of wines and beers while listening to live music. Ticket purchase also includes admission to tour the historic home, its grounds, and on-site galleries. Folks should bring their own shucking tools. *Drayton Hall, 3380 Ashley River Rd. Sunday, 2-5 p.m. $105-$85. (843) 769-2600, draytonhall.org*

MEX 1 COASTAL CANTINA

Inspired by the cantinas that dot the beaches of the Baja Peninsula, Mex 1 serves up a long list of creative margaritas to pair with tacos, tortas, and Baja bowls. This St. Andrews spot is big on flavor and fun. *(MS) 817 St. Andrews Blvd., (843) 751-4001, mex1coastalcantina.com. $-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

MIDDLETON PLACE RESTAURANT

She-crab soup or okra gumbo make for a lovely lunch after touring Middleton Place and its beautiful gardens. The dinner menu sports fancier fare and sustainable seafood dishes that incorporate local catch. Sunday brunch is all about the corn beef hash bowl or French toast and fried chicken. *(MS) 4300 Ashley River Rd., (843) 266-7477, middletonplace.org. $$-$$$$; L, D. Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳

PEARLZ OYSTER BAR

This convivial spot locared in the Avondale neighborhood offers the same old-school raw bar experience as its downtown sister. Stop in for peel-and-eat shrimp, oyster shooters, and oysters Rockefeller. Main dishes lean toward seafood—think lobster roll and shrimp and grits—but there's also an filet mignon and signature burger. *(ML) 9 Magnolia Rd., (843) 573-2277, pearlzoysterbar.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🐾

SWIG & SWINE

Chef Anthony DiBernardo helms this barbecue bastion where pulled pork, brisket, smoked turkey, ribs, and sausage are sold by the heaping plateful or by the pound to go. Don't miss the sides (especially the Brunswick stew) or the decadent pies (think chocolate bourbon pecan and banana pudding). East of the Cooper? Check out the locale on Highway 41. *(MS) 1217 Savannah Hwy., (843) 225-3805, swigandswinebbq.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

TASTE OF THE ISLANDS

Jamaican ex-pats say this is the place to order ackee (a kind of fruit) and saltfish, the country's national dish. Thursday nights means fish fry with live reggae. *(ML) 630-A Skylark Dr., (843) 737-5681, facebook.com/tasteoftheislandsllc. $-$$; L, D.* ♿ Ⓟ

TRIANGLE CHAR & BAR

Hit up Triangle for grass-fed beef showcased in burgers like the Plain Jane (lettuce, tomato, onion, and cheese) or the decadent Boss Hog (pimiento cheese and caramelized onions), as well as brunch that includes chorizo hash, shrimp tacos, and "Nutty Nana" French toast. *(MS) 828 Savannah Hwy., (843) 377-1300, trianglecharandbar.com. $-$$; L, D, Sat. & Sun. BR.* 🍸 ♿ 🌳 🐾

JAMES ISLAND

BAR GEORGE

The small but amped-up food menu at this Riverland Terrace gem goes far beyond typical bar fare, ranging from fresh oysters and crudo to whole roasted fish and grilled Peruvian chicken with a couple of gussied-up hot dogs thrown in for good measure. Grab glasses of wine and serious craft cocktails, or keep things simple with a domestic beer or a throwback boilermaker. *(MS) 1956 Maybank Hwy., (843) 793-2231, bar-georgechs.com. $$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ☾ ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

BOHEMIAN BULL

This spacious hangout is often occupied by sports fans at the bar, families lunching with their little ones, and 20-somethings playing cornhole out back. Find bar food and burgers galore, as well as hearty sandwiches, fried seafood, plus several salads and wraps for those seeking lighter options. *(MS) 1531 Folly Rd., (843) 868-5016, bohemianbull.com. $-$$$; L, D, Sun. BR.* 🍸 ☾ ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

CHARLESTON CRAB HOUSE

Head out for happy hour and relax along the water with a cold one and a plate of shrimp, savory steampot, or a Southern-fried seafood platter. Arrive in style by pulling up in your boat, or keep your sea legs and people-watch from the dock. *(MS) 145 Wappoo Creek Dr., (843) 795-1963, charlestoncrabhouse.com. $$-$$$$; L, D.* ♿ Ⓟ 🌳

COASTAL CRUST

Find wood-fired Neapolitan-style pies, such as the "Fig & Prosciutto" drizzled with truffle oil and house-made hot honey, as well as a full menu of Italian favorites, from antipasti to dolci. Like its Coleman Boulevard cousin, the restaurant has an outdoor eat-and-play area that parents love. *(MS) 979 Harbor View Rd., (843) 576-4562, coastalcrust.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

CRUST

Steps away from the Terrace Theater, this small pizzeria offers a great option for pre- or post-film eats. Wood-fired pizzas star, but there is a strong supporting cast of sandwiches, salads, and pastas. Check online for pop-ups inspired by flicks showing on the big screen. *(MS) 1956-B Maybank Hwy., (843) 762-5500, crustwoodfiredpizza.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

EDISON

Don't miss the daily special at this off-the-beaten-path eatery where the cuisine spans the globe. Southern chicken and waffles meet shrimp cavatelli, West Indies seafood chowder, and Vietnamese pho tacos. *(MS) 1014 Fort Johnson Rd., (843) 872-5500, edisonjamesisland.com. $$$-$$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

ELLIS CREEK FISH CAMP

Ready for a casual night on the water? There's a mix of salads, tacos, and seafood galore that can be enjoyed alfresco with views of the marsh and creek. Dogs are welcome here and even have a menu of their own. *(MS) 1243 Harbor View Rd., (843) 297-8878, elliscreekfishcamp.com. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

GRUMPY GOAT SEAFOOD CANTINA

Bring the family for outside seating with Tex-Mex tacos, quesadillas, and "Grumpy fajitas" made with chicken, steak, and shrimp. For adult outings, chill down inside with a cold beer and a view of the game from one of the many televisions. *(MS) 1023 Harbor View Rd., (843) 872-6521, grumpygoatcantina.com. $-$$$; D.* 🍸 ☾ ♿ Ⓟ 🌳 🐾

THE HARLOW

Burgers, oysters, and brews headline the menu at this popular, petite spot in the Harbor View Shopping Center. Belly up to the indoor/outdoor bar for raw bar selections, including the daily dressed oyster with caviar, and creative cocktails. Burgers run the gamut from basic to the Wagyu Royale

PHOTOGRAPH BY MCG PHOTOGRAPHY

with Cheese. *(DS) 1015 Harbor View Rd., (843) 459-2867, theharlowchs.com. $-$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 💬

THE JAMES

A well-executed throwback, The James delivers on details that hot spots on the peninsula often lack, such as a roomy interior and excellent soundproofing. Cocktails lean classic, with half of the list devoted to variations on the martini—a perfect primer for the veritable time machine that is much of the menu. Think iceberg wedge with blue cheese and bacon, prime rib, Parker House rolls, and crème brûlée. *(ML) 1939-A Maybank Hwy., (843) 278-1066, thejameschs.com. $$-$$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 💬 🐾

KWEI FEI

In the restaurant adjoining the Charleston Pour House, chef David Schuttenberg brings the heat with his homage to the flavors of Sichuan. That means bold noodle bowls plus small plates that turn the spice up loud on everything from tender lamb dumplings to dry-rubbed chicken wings to an ice cream sundae topped with chile crisp and Sichuan candied peanuts. Go all in and order one of their creative cocktails made with *baijiu*, a Chinese spirit made from fermented sorghum. *(MS) 1977 Maybank Hwy., (843) 225-0094, kweifei.com. $-$$$; D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 💬

MARTIN'S BAR-B-QUE JOINT

You could fill up on pit standards like the brisket, pulled pork, or turkey at this barbecue outpost from West Tennessee. But don't miss the outliers, like the fried catfish "Redneck Taco" served on a hoecake and smothered in slaw. The hickory baked beans are just one of many stellar sides. *(MS) 1622 Highland Ave., (843) 790-0838, martinsbbqjoint.com/charleston. $$-$$$; L, D.* 🍸 ♿ Ⓟ 💬 🐾

MELVIN'S BBQ

Serving up chopped pork barbecue—as well as the "favorite cheeseburger" of Emeril Lagasse—this James Island outpost of the original Mount Pleasant eatery is the perfect place to stop for fuel on the way to Folly Beach. And for hash and rice aficionados, Melvin's is the best around. *(MS) 538 Folly Rd., (843) 762-0511, melvinsbbq.com. $-$$$$; L, D.* 💬 Ⓟ ♿ 🐾

MONDO'S

Following a renovation in the fall, this homey Italian joint has reopened its doors to hungry customers. Like the best of James Island's many restaurants, Mondo's serves up good food without any of the fuss of similar cafés found downtown. Join the many regulars at this spot for primo pastas, such as the Italian sausage lasagna and penne with vodka sauce, and a robust wine list. *(MS) 915 Folly Rd., (843) 795-8400, eatatmondos.com. $$-$$$$; D.* Ⓟ 💬 🐾

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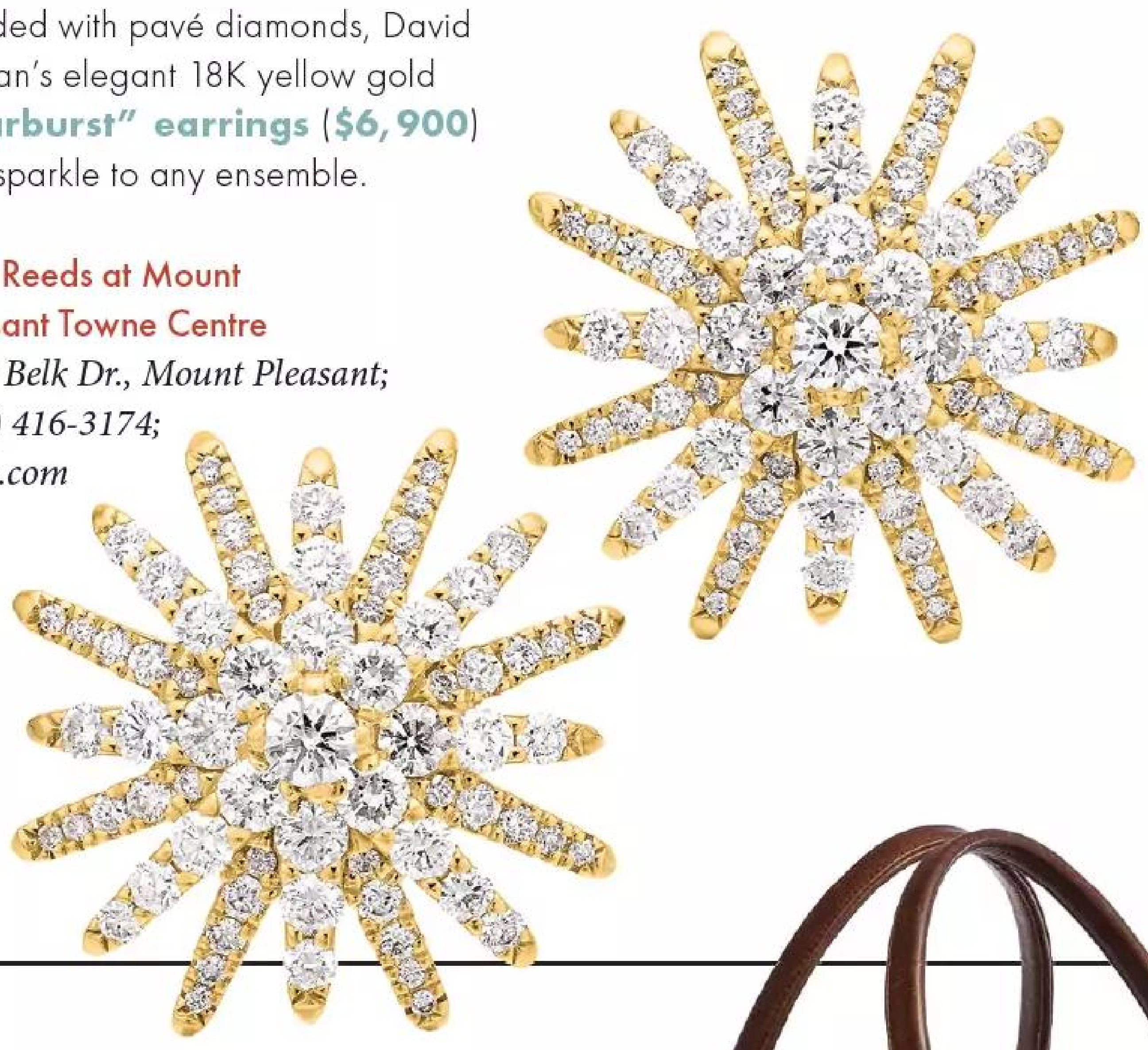
love it

Lovely finds for everyone on your list

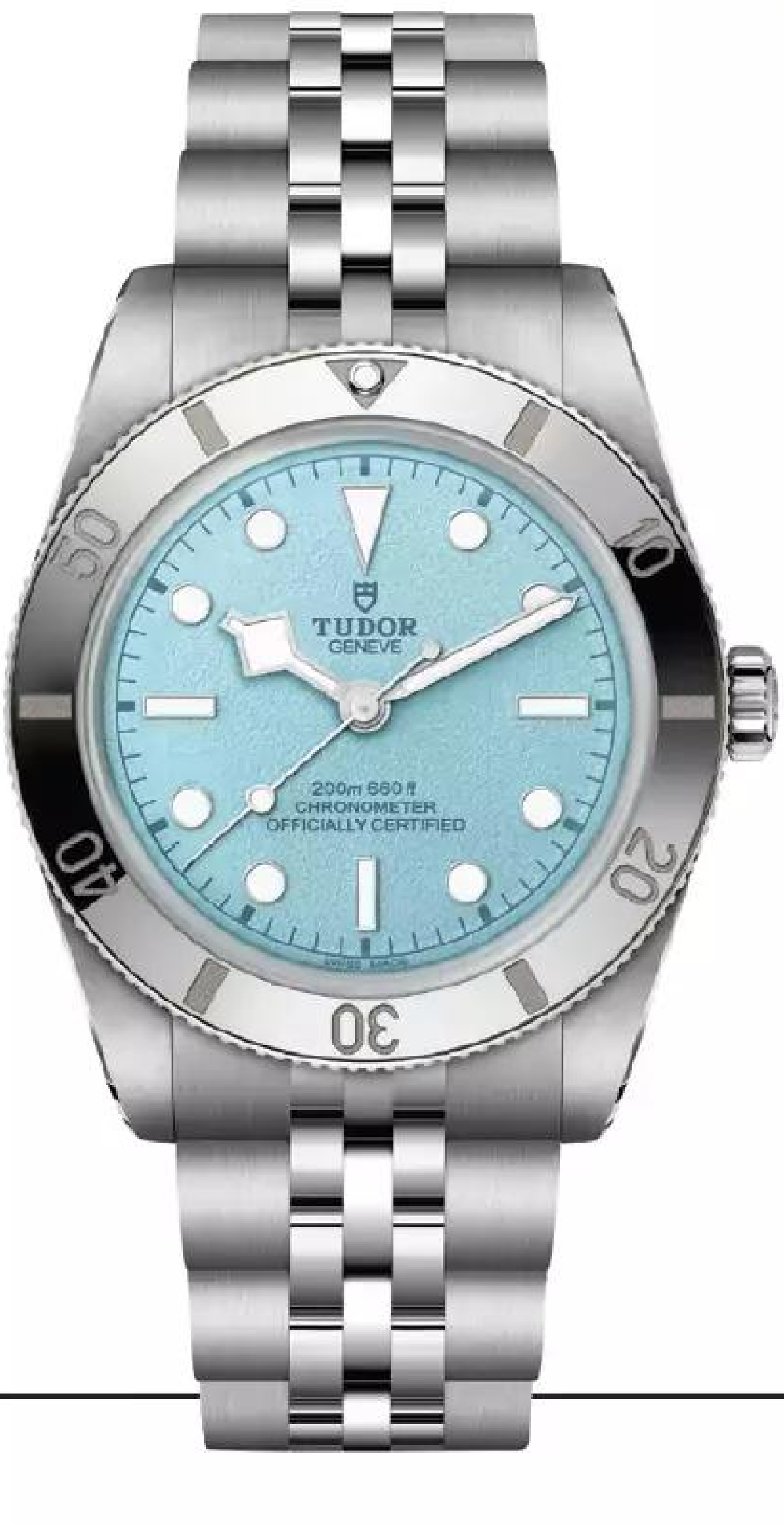
Studded with pavé diamonds, David Yurman's elegant 18K yellow gold **"Starburst" earrings** (**$6,900**) add sparkle to any ensemble.

» **Reeds at Mount Pleasant Towne Centre**
1239 Belk Dr., Mount Pleasant;
(843) 416-3174;
reeds.com



This leather Moore & Giles **"Booker" duffel bag** (**$925**), shown in "Baldwin Oak," is a travel must-have with lots of room to spare.

» **M. Dumas & Sons**
294 King St., (843) 723-8603,
mdumasandsons.com



Shown in "Lagoon Blue," the TUDOR **"Black Bay 54" wristwatch** (**$4,350**) combines form and function with unrivaled craftsmanship.

» **MP Demetre**
253 King St.,
(843) 722-2073,
demetrejewelers.com

Keep things organized with this weathered **"Ryan" nightstand** (**$588**).

» **Steven Shell**
640 Coleman Blvd.,
Mount Pleasant;
(843) 216-3900;
stevenshellliving.com

VALMONT
Prime
RENEWING PACK

Use Valmont's nourishing **Prime Renewing Pack** (**$330**) to refresh your complexion and visibly smooth fine lines and wrinkles.

» **The Spa of Charleston**
387 King St., (843) 823-1506,
thespaofcharleston.com

Perfect for cocktail parties and everyday lounging alike, this luxurious **velvet sofa** (**$8,838**) is upholstered in a vibrant tomato red.

» **Michael Mitchell**
414 King St., (843) 577-0400, michaelmitchellinc.com

Featured in Gwynn's Grand Holiday Book, the heirloom-quality **"Ashoka" necklace** (**$5.19 million**) by Kwiat features 28.77 carats of brilliance, including a 22.39-carat pear-shaped stone.

» **Gwynn's of Mount Pleasant**
916 Houston Northcutt Blvd.,
Mount Pleasant; (843) 884-9518;
gwynns.com

Featuring a chic embroidered design, the machine-washable **"Charleston" sandal** (**$138**) delivers all-day comfort with a cushioned insole.

» **Charleston Shoe Company**
161 King St., (843) 882-6900,
charlestonshoeco.com

For festive gatherings, set the table with **Sabre five-piece Bistro flatware** (**$80 per setting**).

» **Tableau**
180 King St.,
(843) 534-7431,
tableauonking.com

Little ones can cuddle and play with this adorable **plush mermaid princess** (**$76**) from toy company Cuddle & Kind.

» **Under the Almond Trees**
190 King St., (843) 937-6144,
underthealmondtrees.com

Celebrate Christmas with this trio of hand-painted **nativity wise men** (**$130**) dressed in ornate robes with gold accents.

» **Deguise Interiors**
629 Johnnie Dodds Blvd.,
Mount Pleasant;
(843) 971-1491;
deguiseinteriors.com

Elevate your next game night with this luxury **tic-tac-toe board** (**$99**) handcrafted from natural wood by Mexican artisans.

» **Arhaus at Mount Pleasant Towne Centre**
1122 Market Center Blvd., Mount Pleasant;
(843) 216-0705; arhaus.com

Poltrona Frau's leather **"Archibald" armchair** (**$6,860**) is an icon of modern style.

» **Alexandre Fleuren Interiors**
100 Coastal Dr.,
(843) 437-1396,
alexandrefleuren.com

PHOTOGRAPHS (12) COURTESY OF THE RETAILERS

love it

Lovely finds for everyone on your list

Gift Fluff & Tuff's squeaky **"Clara Triceratops" dog toy ($19)** to the four-legged friends in your life.

» **Dolittle's**
352 Freshfields Dr.,
Kiawah Island;
(843) 872-5060,
freshfieldsvillage.com

Featuring delicately hand-carved palmetto fronds, the 14K yellow gold **"Palmetto" necklace ($1,480)** is adorned with natural diamonds.

» **Seyahan**
57 Broad St., (843) 252-2851,
seyahan.com

Enhance any outfit with these stylish **"J-Hoop" earrings ($600)** made from 14K yellow gold.

» **Diamonds Direct**
1911 Hwy. 17 N.,
Mount Pleasant;
(843) 606-2558;
diamondsdirect.com

Admire your ensemble in design company Bramble's **"Cordelia" standing mirror ($1,499)** from the Cholet collection.

» **J&K Home Furnishings**
600 Long Point Rd.,
Mount Pleasant;
(843) 800-4015;
jkhomefurnishings.com

Indulge in the vibrant, candy cane-inspired fragrance of Glasshouse's festive **"Naughty & Nice" candle ($60)**.

» **Rhodes Home & Gift**
84 Folly Road Blvd., (843) 789-3180, rhodesboutique.com

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Give the gift of hydrated skin with this Epionce stocking stuffer set that includes **body cream, hand cream, firming mask,** and **lip renewal ($100)**.

» **Charleston Medical Spa**
1950 Maybank Hwy., Ste A,
(843) 225-3223,
charlestonmedicalspa.com

Crafted in 14K yellow gold, this **sculptural statement ring ($2,525)** features beaded detailing woven into an X-shaped silhouette, accented by shimmering diamonds.

» Polly's Fine Jewelry
1492 North Hwy. 17, Mount Pleasant; (843) 884-2447; pollysjewelry.com

VERONICA BEARD

This eye-catching houndstooth suit from Veronica Beard includes the tailored **"Gracie" flare pants ($478)** and **"Kendryn" dickey jacket ($998)**.

» The Finicky Filly
303 King St., (843) 534-0203, thefinickyfilly.com

Keep cocktail supplies at the ready with this stylish **"Carrinho" bar cart ($767)**, featuring an antique brass finish and two mirror shelves.

» CHD Interiors
280 W. Coleman Blvd., Mount Pleasant; (843) 357-1700; chdinteriors.com

Created by Stokke, this Yoga **baby bouncer ($299)** creates a safe, soothing space for newborns to rest.

» Under the Almond Trees
190 King St., (843) 937-6144, underthealmondtrees.com

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1 16oz L'AVANT Collective Multipurpose Cleaner

A collaboration between Geometry and L'AVANT, this **gift set ($34)** includes a custom kitchen towel and bottle of multipurpose cleaner.

» Nellie & Lo
976 Houston Northcutt Blvd., Mount Pleasant; (843) 388-5306; nellieandlo.com

Luli
Pinot Noir
Santa Lucia Highlands
Elijah Craig
Small Batch
1789
Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey
Bottles in cans
Holy City Brewing
Hazy India Pale Ale

Shop local and raise a glass to good times with this vibrant **Luli 2023 pinot noir ($29.99 per bottle)**, **Elijah Craig's small batch bourbon ($44.99 per 1.75L bottle)**, or locally-brewed **Holy City Brewing Bottles in cans ($10.99 per six-pack)**.

» Bottles
610 Coleman Blvd., Mount Pleasant; (843) 849-9463; shopbottles.com

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harvestcateringcharleston.com
843-270-7468
harvest_catering

(weddings)

Lowcountry couples tie the knot

PHOTOGRAPH BY NICK LEVINE PHOTOGRAPHY

Erin Solomon & Lian Norris

(JUNE 14, 2025)

While Erin and Lian **met as freshmen at Clemson University**, their romance didn't flourish until the summer before senior year. After graduating, the pair moved to Gainesville, Florida, for graduate school. During a trip to Asheville, North Carolina, in May 2024, Lian proposed to Erin in the greenhouse of **the Biltmore Conservatory**. Two days later, while on a hike, Erin orchestrated her own proposal. They returned to Lian's hometown to get hitched, hosting an elegant reception in the rotunda of the **Gibbes Museum of Art**, followed by a glowing reception in the garden.

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Gianni Breggia & Madeline Burden

(MAY 11, 2025)

Despite meeting in their college dorm at Liberty University in 2019, sparks didn't start to fly for Madeline and Gianni until four years later during a mutual friend's wedding. As **romantic feelings developed** over the next year, the two frequently visited each other, with her in Virginia and him in Rhode Island, until they settled in Charleston. Gianni popped the question during a summer stroll on Kiawah Island's Beachwalker Park, surrounded by red roses and glasses of champagne. The couple, who now live in Summerville, said "I do" at **Hart Meadows Ranch on John's Island** during a ceremony officiated by Madeline's father, closing out their joyous day with **a dance party and fire-roasted s'mores**.

John Hutto & Chris Gaster

(APRIL 25, 2025)

For Chris and John, what started as an easy conversation in a Greensboro, North Carolina, pub would **blossom into a lasting relationship**. The smitten duo made it through a year of long-distance dating while Chris lived in Raleigh before reuniting and building a life together in Charlotte. Having often made their way to the Lowcountry for vacations, John asked Chris to marry him on **Valentine's Day** while enjoying a stroll on Sullivan's Island, and afterward, they celebrated their engagement with family at Little Palm. A few months later, nearly a decade after their initial meeting, the couple, who now reside in Mount Pleasant, snuck away for an intimate elopement at **the Ritz-Carlton on Amelia Island** in Florida. Afterward, they gathered friends and family for a reception on Goldbug Island.

Web EXTRAS **Hearing wedding bells?** ***Charleston*** would love to know. If you currently live or grew up in the Charleston area, were married within the last eight months, and would like to see your announcement run, please visit **charlestonmag.com** to submit your wedding information and photographs. Due to space constraints, inclusion is not guaranteed.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (TOP TO BOTTOM) CAYLIE BETH PHOTOGRAPHY & JENSON BELL

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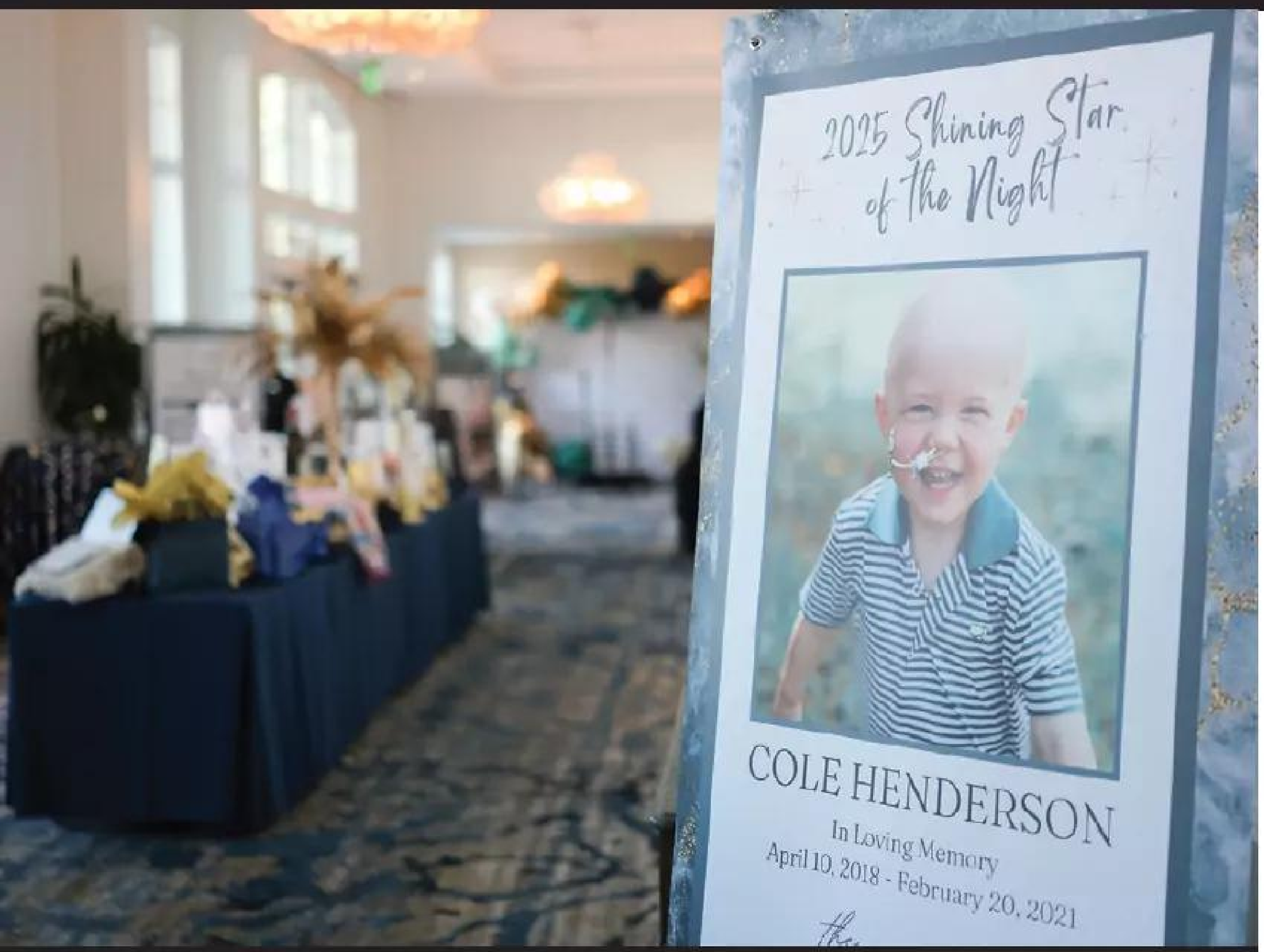
Attendees participated in a paddle raise during the Shining Stars Gala.

Josh and Jen McConnell, Dr. Jacqueline Kraveka, Alex Jenkins, and Zac and Amanda Naramore


2025 Shining Star of The Night
COLE HENDERSON
In Loving Memory
April 10, 2018 - February 20, 2021

The evening paid tribute to Cole Henderson, who lost his battle with cancer in 2021.

Auction chairwoman Lindsay Ram and Laura Ham

(fête set)

SHINING STARS GALA

September 20, 2025

The Event: An elegant affair awaited guests at The Sweetgrass Inn at Wild Dunes Resort during The McConnell Foundation's fourth-annual black-tie gala supporting the Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital and its research to treat and prevent pediatric cancers. Guests embraced this year's "Sea-lestial" theme while enjoying a buffet dinner, sipping specialty "Constellation Cosmos" beneath a canopy of stars, and savoring a late-night snack provided by Holy City Popcorn. Silent auction items ranged from a staycation package at The Loutrel, to adventures in Iceland, to a six-month club membership to the Wine Shop. Since launching the gala in 2022, The McConnell Foundation has contributed nearly $275,000 to MUSC's pediatric cancer research.

Overheard: "Our pediatric cancer research lab is funded entirely through private donors and fundraisers, making this kind of community support vital to advancing life-saving discoveries for children battling cancer," —MUSC pediatric oncologist Jacqueline Kraveka

Beneficiary: The McConnell Foundation

PHOTOGRAPHS (8) BY MATT PEACOCK

Kelly Luchtel, Jen Prod, and Kristin Sikorski

Clint and Erin Henderson discussed their late son's treatment.

Giving4Good auctioneer Teresa Zito

Patrick and Gianna Lundgren, Joli and Tyler Collie, Eli Anderton, Lexi Cook, and Kelsey and Randy Medders

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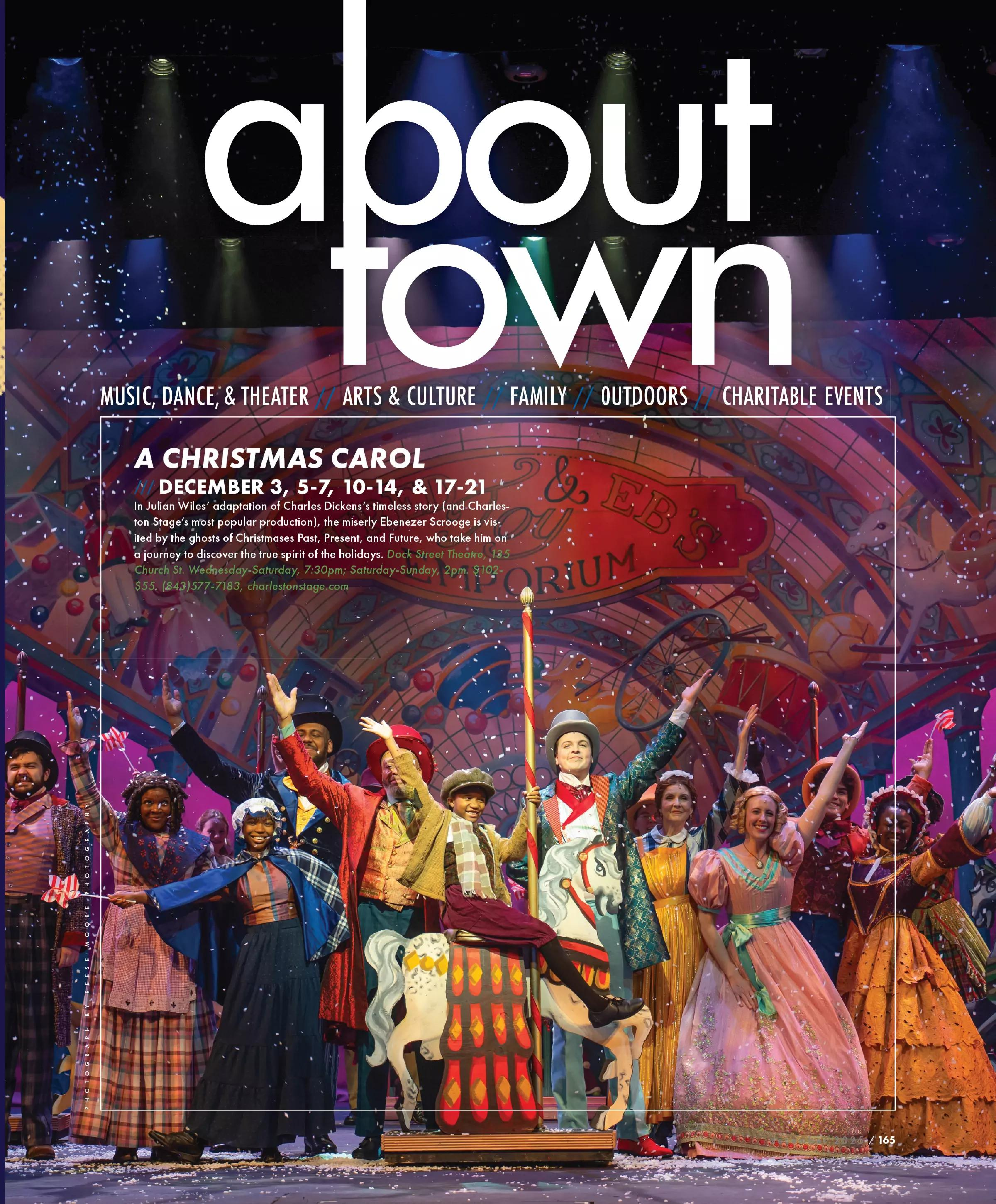

about town

MUSIC, DANCE, & THEATER // ARTS & CULTURE // FAMILY // OUTDOORS // CHARITABLE EVENTS

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

// DECEMBER 3, 5-7, 10-14, & 17-21

In Julian Wiles' adaptation of Charles Dickens's timeless story (and Charleston Stage's most popular production), the miserly Ebenezer Scrooge is visited by the ghosts of Christmases Past, Present, and Future, who take him on a journey to discover the true spirit of the holidays. *Dock Street Theatre, 135 Church St. Wednesday-Saturday, 7:30pm; Saturday-Sunday, 2pm. $102-$55. (843)577-7183, charlestonstage.com*

PHOTOGRAPH BY REESE MOORE PHOTOGRAPHY

Holiday Parades

A craft decked out with colorful light displays cruises through Charleston Harbor during the annual Holiday Parade of Boats, which is on December 13 this year.

MONCKS CORNER CHRISTMAS PARADE

/// DECEMBER 5

Dozens of decorated floats will participate in this nighttime parade that comes on the heels of the city's annual Christmas Tree Lighting program. Downtown shops will be open, and vendors will be lining Main Street. *Unity Park on Main St., Moncks Corner. Friday, 5-8pm. Free. monckscornersc.gov*

PARK CIRCLE CHRISTMAS PARADE

/// DECEMBER 6

North Charleston's Park Circle neighborhood decorates its streets with twinkling lights, trees, and other holiday decorations. Watch as festive floats, vintage cars, and other vehicles cruise around the greenspace. Afterward, enjoy live music, hayrides, marshmallow roasting, and an arts and crafts market. *Park Circle Community Building & grounds, 4800 Park Cir., North Charleston. Saturday, 4-8pm. Free. (843)745-1028, northcharleston.org*

CITY OF CHARLESTON CHRISTMAS PARADE

/// DECEMBER 7

This high-energy procession, featuring marching musical ensembles, local clubs, and community organizations, begins on Broad Street at Rutledge, travels north on Meeting Street, and concludes at Marion Square. Watch a grand tree lighting and other festivities. *Broad St. & Rutledge Ave. Sunday, 3pm. Free. (843)724-7305, charlestonarts.org*

CITY OF GOOSE CREEK HOLIDAY PARADE

/// DECEMBER 13

Begin the day with holiday cheer during this mile-long parade that starts on St. James Avenue and continues to Marilyn Street. *St. James Ave., Goose Creek. Saturday, 9:30-noon. Free. cityofgoosecreek.com*

FOLLY BEACH CHRISTMAS PARADE

/// DECEMBER 13

Held every year on the second Saturday of December, Folly's holiday parade features floats, marching bands, and costumed revelers. The parade goes from Second and West Ashley streets up Center to Folly River Park. *Center St., Folly Beach. Saturday, noon-5pm. Free. visitfolly.com*

HOLIDAY PARADE OF BOATS

/// DECEMBER 13

Watch as a fleet of festively decorated boats lights up the harbor. Join in on the fun by decorating your own vessel or grab a prime viewing spot on the Battery, at Joe Riley Waterfront Park, or the Mount Pleasant Memorial Waterfront Park Pier as the boats proceed from the Cooper River, through the Charleston Harbor, and into the Ashley River. *Locations vary. Saturday, 6pm. Free. (843)724-7305, charlestonarts.org*

MOUNT PLEASANT CHRISTMAS LIGHT PARADE

/// DECEMBER 14

One of the Lowcountry's biggest holiday celebrations begins with a Christmas tree lighting and fireworks show. Coleman Boulevard is blocked off for the motorcade that features more than 100 floats. The parade starts at Live Oak Drive traveling south and ending at the intersection of West Coleman Boulevard and Patriots Point Road. *Coleman Blvd., Mount Pleasant. Sunday, 5:30-8pm. Free. (843)849-2061, experiencemountpleasant.com*

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE HOLIDAY PARADE OF BOATS

music, dance, & theater

THE NUTCRACKER

/// DECEMBER 1-3

The South Carolina Ballet ushers in the holiday season with this extravagant theatrical production that pairs traditional choreography with original songs. Follow along as Clara journeys through a magical world of snow and sweets and faces off against the Rat King. *Charleston Music Hall, 37 John St. Monday-Wednesday, 7pm. $144-$53. (843)853-2252, charlestonmusichall.com*

EUREKA DAY

/// DECEMBER 4-6

Pure Theatre presents the Southeast regional premiere of this play described as "gaspingly funny" by *The New York Times*. Directed by Rodney Lee Rogers, the comedy centers on a team of five frazzled board members for the Eureka Day School as they try to control a mumps outbreak that descends the community into chaos. *Cannon Street Arts Center, 134 Cannon St. Wednesday-Saturday, 7:30pm. $47. (843)723-4444, puretheatre.org*

A CHRISTMAS STORY

/// DECEMBER 5-7, 12-14, & 19-23

The Footlight Players present a theatrical adaptation of the 1983 film that follows nine-year-old Ralphie Parker on his quest to get a genuine Red Ryder BB gun for Christmas. The heartwarming show features iconic elements from the movie, including the infamous fishnet-clad "leg lamp." *Queen Street Playhouse, 20 Queen St. Friday-Tuesday, times vary. $58-$25. (843)722-4487, footlightplayers.net*

A MOTOWN CHRISTMAS

/// DECEMBER 5

Vocal group The Motortown All-Stars present an evening of Motown's greatest hits and seasonal standards accompanied by high-energy choreography and soulful harmonies. *North Charleston Performing Arts Center, 5001 Coliseum Dr., North Charleston. Friday, 7pm. $136-$62. (843)529-5000, northcharlestoncoliseumpac.com*

THE SOUND OF CHARLESTON

/// DECEMBER 5, 12, 19, 23, 26, & 30

This annual lineup of candlelit holiday shows is hosted at Circular Congregational, one of the oldest churches on the peninsula. Local talents will perform a variety of musical selections highlighting Charleston's history, from gospel spirituals and Civil War camp songs to jazz standards by

marie rodriguez
PHOTOGRAPHY

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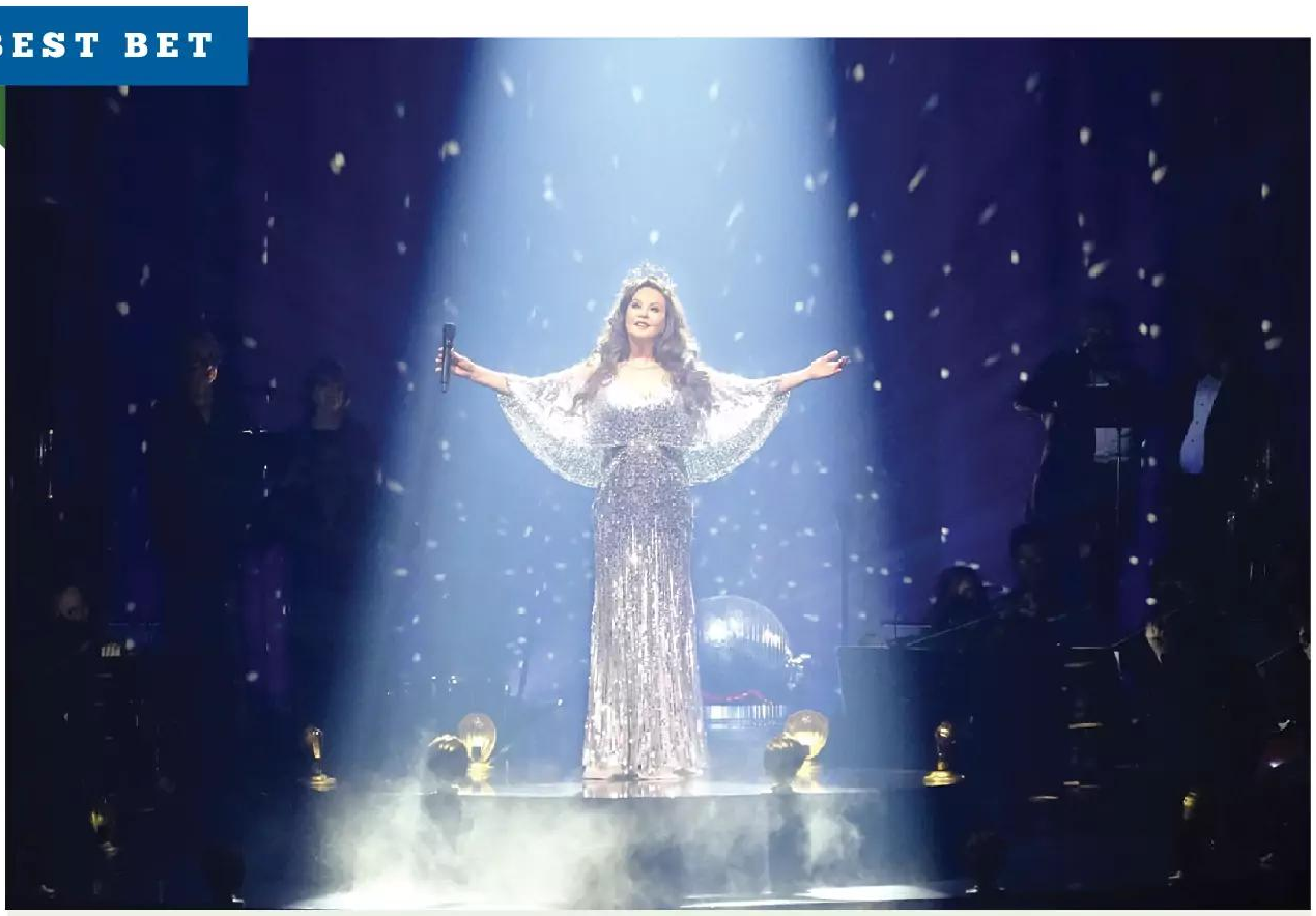

SARAH BRIGHTMAN: "A WINTER SYMPHONY"

/// DECEMBER 4

World-renowned soprano Sarah Brightman brings her national holiday concert to the Lowcountry. Known for her soaring vocals and theatrical performances, Brightman performs seasonal classics alongside selections from her celebrated career. *North Charleston Performing Arts Center, 5001 Coliseum Dr., North Charleston. Thursday, 7:30pm. $323-$77. (843)529-5000, northcharlestoncoliseumpac.com*

TAYLOR MAC'S HOLIDAY SAUCE

/// DECEMBER 9

Pulitzer Prize-finalist Taylor Mac presents a dynamic holiday show that blends cabaret, theater, and live music, joined by designer Machine Dazzle, music director Matt Ray, and an eight-piece band. Mac is an award-winning playwright, actor, singer, and performance artist known for works that explore American identity through drag, theater, and music. *Charleston Gaillard Center, 95 Calhoun St. Tuesday, 7:30pm. $92-$33. (843)724-5212, gaillardcenter.org*

A GULLAH CHRISTMAS CONCERT

/// DECEMBER 10

Boone Hall Plantation & Gardens celebrates the culture of the Gullah Geechee people. Tour the stately house, which has been beautifully decorated for the holiday season, then listen to songs and stories performed by professional a capalla group The Plantation Singers. Enjoy complimentary hot chocolate, cider, and cookies at the Cotton Dock prior to the performance. *Boone Hall Plantation & Gardens, 1235 Long Point Rd., Mount Pleasant. Wednesday, 7:30pm. $30-$15. (843)884-4371, boonehallplantation.com*

George Gershwin, in addition to familiar holiday tunes. *Circular Congregational Church, 150 Meeting St. Tuesday & Friday, 7pm. $28-$16. (843)270-4903, soundofcharleston.com*

GOSPEL CHRISTMAS

/// DECEMBER 6

The Charleston Gospel Choir returns for its 25th annual holiday concert, blending rich harmonies with vibrant energy. The group performs gospel songs, spirituals, traditional carols, and sacred music for events locally and across the country. *Ashley River Baptist Church, 1101 Savannah Hwy. Saturday, 7pm. $35-$15. (843)766-5521, charlestongospelchoir.org*

HOLIDAY SWING

/// DECEMBER 6

Joined by multicultural choir Lowcountry Voices, the Charleston Jazz Orchestra celebrates the season with a concert featuring a big band take on holiday favorites, infusing Yuletide tunes with modern jazz. *Charleston Music Hall, 37 John St. Saturday, 5 & 8pm. $67-$10. (843)853-2252, charlestonjazz.com*

ONE VISION OF QUEEN

/// DECEMBER 6

Experience singer Marc Martel's powerful tribute to Freddie Mercury in a concert filled with Queen's greatest hits. Known for his vocal likeness to Mercury, Martel performs iconic rock anthems such as "We Will Rock You," "Another One Bites the Dust," and "We Are the Champions" with a cover band. *North Charleston Performing Arts Center, 5001 Coliseum Dr., North Charleston. Saturday, 7:30pm. $177-$63. (843)529-5000, northcharlestoncoliseumpac.com*

ANDY ARMSTRONG & FRIENDS

/// DECEMBER 7

This Chamber Music Charleston salon concert features pianist Andy Armstrong alongside violinist Stefan Jackiw and clarinetist Yoonah Kim in a cabaret-style setting. Audiences can expect an intimate performance that highlights world-class musicianship. *South Carolina Society Hall, 72 Meeting St. Sunday, 2 & 4pm. $65-$35. (843)763-4941, chambermusiccharleston.org*

TOPHOUSE

/// DECEMBER 7

Montana-based band Tophouse brings its acoustic-driven sound to the Charleston Pour House for an evening of high-energy originals. Playing an amalgamation of folk, pop, rock, and bluegrass, the group has toured nationally, amassing millions of streams on Spotify. *Charleston Pour House, 1977 Maybank Hwy. Sunday, 8:30pm. $30-$25. (843)571-4343, charlestonpourhouse.com*

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SPIEGLETENT

/// DECEMBER 4-6, 11-13, & 18-20

The traveling spiegeltent ("mirror tent") dance hall returns to the Lowcountry for its annual holiday cabaret extravaganza. The venue, outfitted with stained glass windows, a velvet-draped ceiling, and a multitude of mirrors, will host UK entertainment company Underbelly for an adults-only cabaret show that blends aerial feats, sword-swallowing, and burlesque. *Charleston Gaillard Center, 95 Calhoun St. Thursday-Sunday, times vary. $88-$65. (843)724-5212, gaillardcenter.org*

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF (BRIGHTMAN) NORTH CHARLESTON PERFORMING ARTS CENTER & (SPIEGLETENT) CHARLESTON GAILLARD CENTER

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DAVID FOSTER & KATHARINE MCPHEE

/// DECEMBER 10

Sixteen-time Grammy Award-winner David Foster and Broadway star Katharine McPhee return to the Charleston Gaillard Center for a holiday show. Foster, whose producing and songwriting credits include collaborations with Celine Dion, Whitney Houston, and Michael Buble, will perform several of his greatest hits while accompanied by McPhee's powerful vocals. *Charleston Gaillard Center, 95 Calhoun St. Wednesday, 7:30pm. $99-$57. (843)724-5212, gaillardcenter.org*

ALLMAN BETTS FAMILY REVIVAL

/// DECEMBER 11

Experience this ninth-annual tribute concert celebrating the music and legacy of the Allman Brothers Band. Led by Devon Allman and Duane Betts, the show brings together an all-star lineup—including Amanda Shires, Cody Dickinson, and Jimmy Hall—performing classic hits and Southern rock favorites. *Charleston Gaillard Center, 95 Calhoun St. Thursday, 7:30pm. $93-40. (843)724-5212, gaillardcenter.org*

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SPIRITUALS CONCERT

/// DECEMBER 14

The city's oldest plantation, Drayton Hall, hosts the 41st-annual Holiday Spirituals Concert, offering guests the opportunity to sip wassail, a historic holiday libation, and listen to ancestral hymns performed by Ann Caldwell and The Magnolia Singers. *Drayton Hall, 3380 Ashley River Rd., Sunday, 3:30-5pm. $85-$75. (843)769-2600, draytonhall.org*

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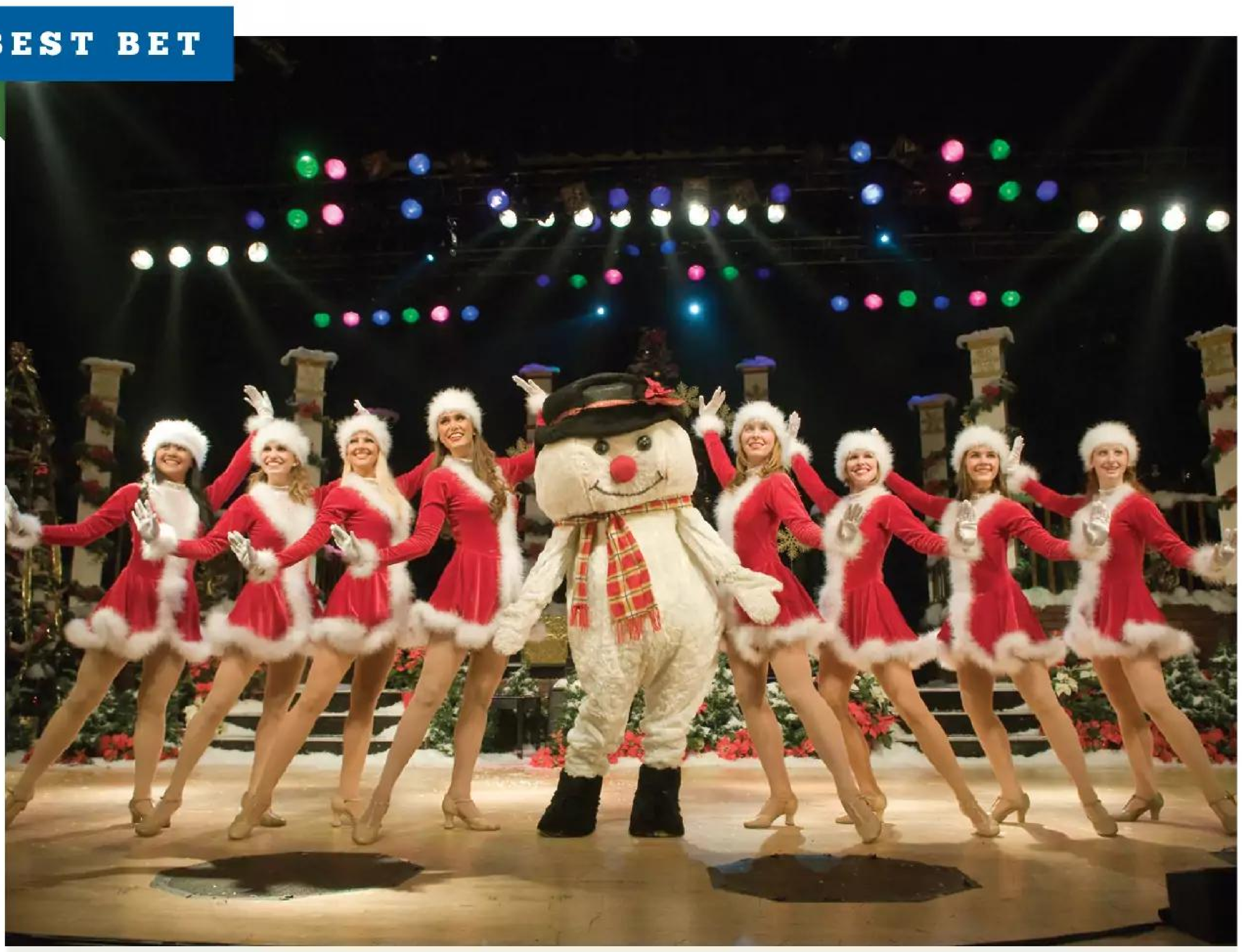

THE CHARLESTON CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

/// DECEMBER 12-14 & 16-21

Hosted by Broadway-trained entertainers Brad and Jennifer Moranz, the ever-popular Charleston Christmas Special returns for the 30th year, featuring a blend of holiday classics and original songs. The husband-and-wife duo work together to write, choreograph, and perform in the show, which includes a mixture of music, dance, and comedy sketches that vary each year. Special guests include ventriloquist Michael Minor, singer Tiffany Parker, and Broadway star Matthew Shingledecker. *Charleston Music Hall, 37 John St. Days & times vary. $44-$21. (843)853-2252, charlestonmusichall.com*

LIE DOWN & LISTEN

/// DECEMBER 12 & 13

Settle into cushions and blankets in the rotunda of the Gibbes Museum of Art for an evening of Tibetan bowls sound healing, meditation, and enlightening live piano designed for deep relaxation. Created by London-based pianist Christina McMaster, Lie Down and Listen hosts traveling classical concert experiences marked by relaxation and sound healing. *Gibbes Museum of Art, 135 Meeting St. Friday, 5 & 7 pm; Saturday 3 & 5pm. $70-$55. (843)722-2706, gibbesmuseum.org*

THE PRINCESS BRIDE: AN INCONCEIVABLE EVENING WITH CARY ELWES

/// DECEMBER 13

Best known for his role as Westley in *The Princess Bride*, actor Cary Elwes presents a screening of the film followed by a moderated discussion. Elwes shares behind-the-scenes stories, on-set memories, and personal insights from the making of the beloved 1987 adventure comedy. *Charleston Gaillard Center, 95 Calhoun St. Saturday, 7pm. $69-34. (843)724-5212, gaillardcenter.org*

CHARLES WESLEY GODWIN

/// DECEMBER 14

Drawing inspiration from artists such as Kris Kristofferson and Willie Nelson, West Virginia-born singer-songwriter Charles Wesley Godwin crafts narrative-driven songs that tell relatable personal stories. Godwin released his third album, *Family Ties*, in 2023. *The Riviera, 227 King St. Sunday, 8pm. $369-$57. therivierachs.com*

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF (CONCERT) DRAYTON HALL & (DANCERS) CHARLESTON MUSIC HALL

JUSTIN WILLMAN

/// DECEMBER 18

Magician, comedian, and actor Justin Willman presents new family-friendly material for the holidays. Known for his hit Netflix series *Magic for Humans* and appearances on *The Tonight Show*, Willman combines relatable humor with illusions for an all-ages performance. *North Charleston Performing Arts Center, 5001 Coliseum Dr., North Charleston. Thursday, 7pm. $190-$57. (843)529-5000, northcharlestoncoliseumpac.com*

THE SOUL OF THE SEASON

/// DECEMBER 18

Local vocalist Zandrina Dunning hosts this festive concert at The Peacock, a speakeasy-style lounge and bar. Sip on signature cocktails while enjoying a blend of live musical and spoken word performances, as well as an art walk showcasing local creatives and vendors. *The Peacock, 213 East Bay St. Thursday, 7:30-9:30pm. $35. (843)323-9896, thezdexperience.com*

SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

/// DECEMBER 20

The North Charleston Pops orchestra, joined by guest artists including Emily Curtis and Brandon John Waller, presents an evening of carols and festive favorites. Audiences can expect timeless

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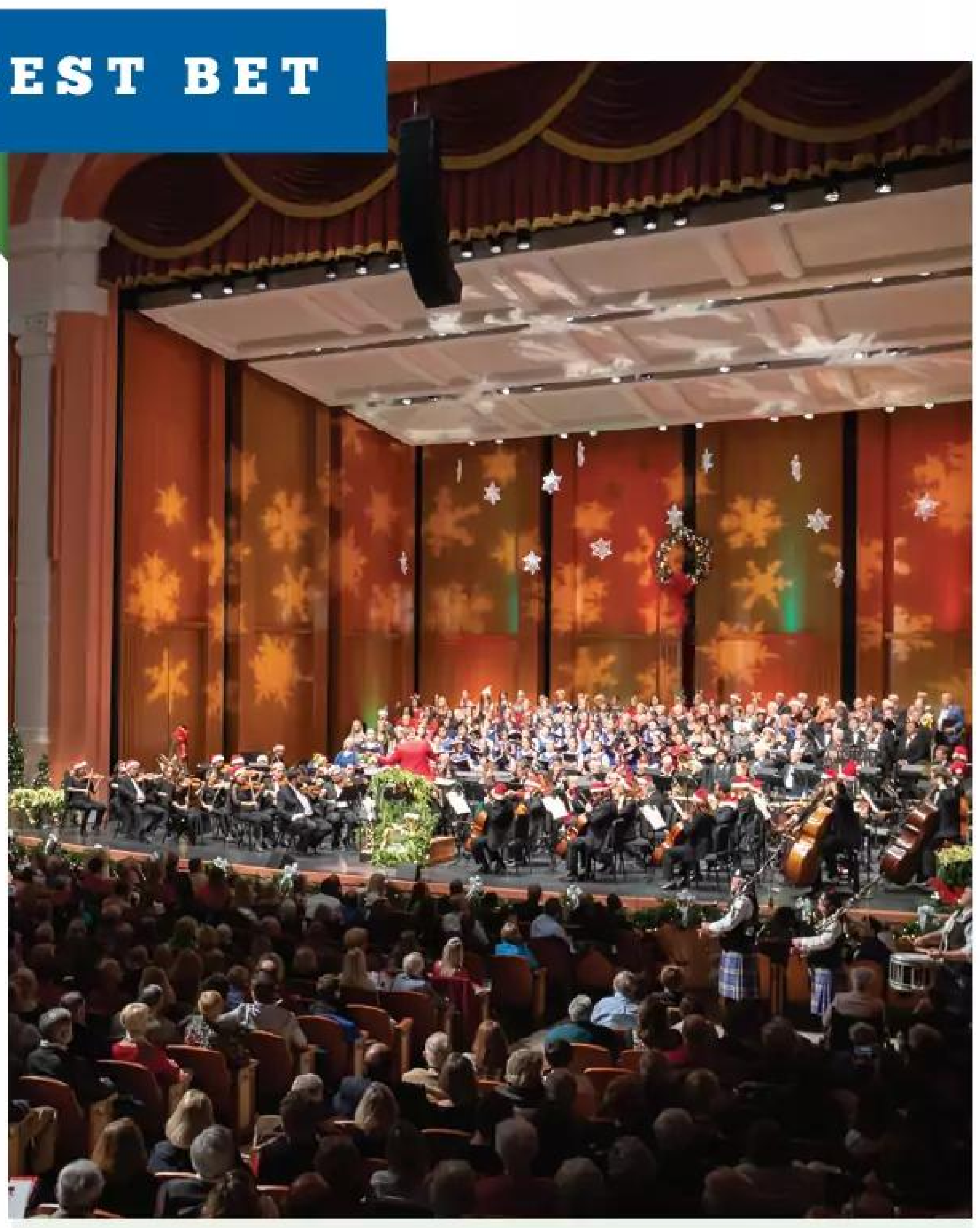

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALYONA SEMENOV

CSO POPS 2: HOLIDAY POPS!

/// DECEMBER 18-20

The Charleston Symphony's Pops orchestra offers a festive holiday program of movie soundtracks and timeless classics featuring Broadway singer and Nashville recording artist Rachel Potter. *Charleston Gaillard Center, 95 Calhoun St. Thursday-Saturday, 7:30pm. $178-$48. (843)723-7528, charlestonsymphony.org*

MEET ONE OF OUR CHARLESTON MAKERS

sponsored by REDUX CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER

NAME: Quintin Middleton

HOMETOWN: I've lived in St. Stephen since I was little.

HIS BUSINESS: Middleton Made Knives, founded in 2010

HIS INSPIRATION: Watching fantasy movies with legendary swords was very alluring to me as a little kid, and that spurred a passion for the craft. I was in school to be an aircraft mechanic when I connected with my mentor, Jason Knight, a knife maker living in Harleyville. I became his apprentice for six years, sopping up the atmosphere, asking questions, and watching him work. One day, the Holy Spirit spoke to me and told me to make chef knives. So I hit the ground running, cold-calling restaurants and introducing myself to top chefs around Charleston in their kitchens, all with my two kids in a stroller.

HOW HE'S EVOLVED: I've learned there's two rules: sex sells and performance tells. If something looks good, people want to buy it. But it has to perform well to keep them coming back. Everything of mine is well made first and looks good second. I've worked with chefs to develop designs that professionals really want and need, watching how folks work in the kitchen to see what they have and how it could be improved upon.

SUCCESS IS: I've been doing this for so long and chasing the bag that I realize money isn't everything. This is my legacy for my children, and when I retire, they can benefit from what I've built, while still flourishing and figuring out who they are.

LOOKING FOWARD: I'm turning towards a manufacturing mind-set, starting a facility in the community where I can hire local folks and create high-quality knives, taking all the years of trial and error and what I've learned and putting it into a company beyond just me.

FIND HIM: At his studio in Storehouse 8 at the Navy Yard, 2154 Noisette Blvd., Suite 131; Thursday-Saturday, 11-6 p.m.

LEARN MORE: middletonmadeknives.com

SCAN THE CODE

to watch Quintin's video and those of other Charleston Makers, or to find out how to become one.

charleston magazine

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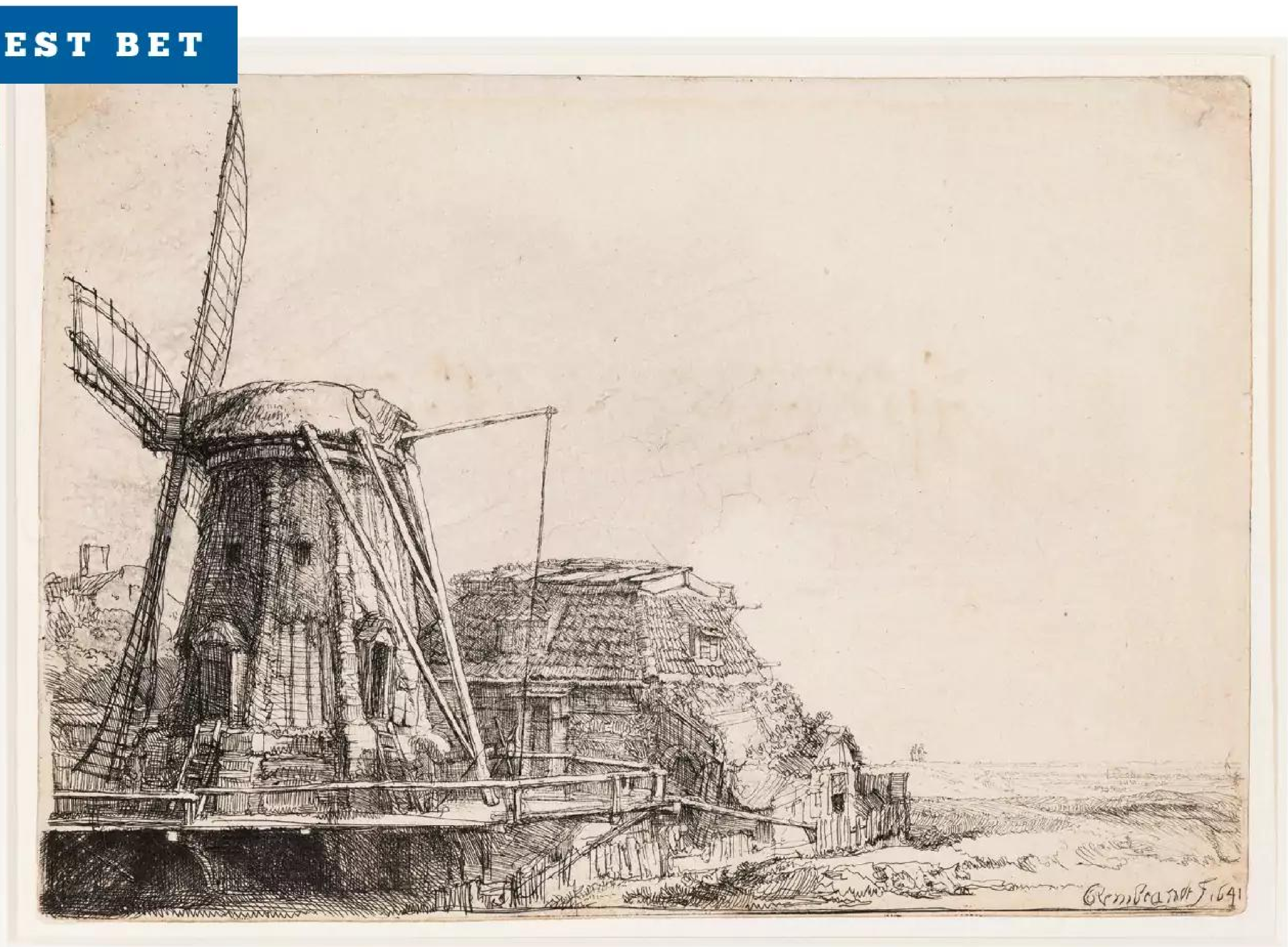

"REMBRANDT: MASTERPIECES IN BLACK & WHITE PRINTS FROM THE REMBRANDT HOUSE MUSEUM"

/// THROUGH JANUARY 11

The Gibbes Museum of Art presents a display of etchings and prints from 17th-century Dutch artist Rembrandt van Rijn. Sourced from the Rembrandt House Museum in Amsterdam, the black-and-white prints point to Rembrandt's lasting impact on Western art, influencing artists such as James McNeill Whistler and Pablo Picasso centuries later. *Gibbes Museum of Art, 135 Meeting St. Monday-Saturday, 10am-5pm; Sunday, 1-5pm. $15-$12. (843)722-2706, gibbesmuseum.org*

songs such as "O Holy Night" and "Sleigh Ride" alongside spirited arrangements that capture the holiday season. *North Charleston Performing Arts Center, 5001 Coliseum Dr., North Charleston. Saturday, 7:30pm. $64-$31. (843)529-5000, NorthCharlestonPOPS.com*

MARSHGRASS MAMAS

/// DECEMBER 21

Founded on John's Island in 2001, the Marshgrass Mamas present a blend of bluegrass, old-time, and Lowcountry roots music, as well as festive arrangements. Hear the all-female ensemble, known for tight harmonies and a playful stage presence, during this holiday concert in the ornate Spiegletent. *Charleston Gaillard Center, 95 Calhoun St. Sunday, 7:30pm. $25. (843)724-5212, gaillardcenter.org*

CELTIC WOMAN

/// DECEMBER 22

Since their debut in 2005, this international sensation has combined traditional Irish music with contemporary techniques. The group's holiday performance includes popular modern songs as well as ancient Gaelic carols. *Charleston Gaillard Center, 95 Calhoun St. Monday, 7:30pm. $105-$70. (843)724-5212, gaillardcenter.org*

NUTCRACKER! MAGICAL CHRISTMAS BALLET

/// DECEMBER 26

This production brings fresh charm to one of the holiday's most beloved traditions, featuring an international cast, puppetry, and costumes and sets designed by European artists, accompanied by Tchaikovsky's enduring music. *North Charleston Performing Arts Center, 5001 Coliseum Dr., North Charleston. Friday, 1 & 5pm. $228-$44. (843)529-5000, northcharlestoncoliseumpac.com*

arts & culture

KENNY NGUYEN: "THE DIVINE EYE"

/// THROUGH DECEMBER 6

Presented by the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art, this evocative, large-scale installation invites viewers to engage with the rich spiritual and cultural history of Vietnam. Mixed-media artist Kenny Nguyen transforms torn strips of silk by dipping them into acrylic paint, layering them onto canvas, and hanging them, drawing on religious symbology. *The Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art, 161 Calhoun St. Monday-Wednesday & Friday-Saturday, 11am-4pm; Thursday, 11am-7pm. Free. (843)953-4422, halsey.cofc.edu*

RAHELEH FILSOOFI: "AT THE EDGE OF ARRIVAL"

/// THROUGH DECEMBER 6

For this exhibit at the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art, feminist artist Raheleh Filsoofi explores migration, land, and memory from the perspective of a Middle Eastern immigrant woman living in the American South. Filsoofi, whose work often revolves around themes of movement, immigration, and social activism, will incorporate a variety of multimedia elements in the exhibit, including "dust paintings" and videography. *The Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art, 161 Calhoun St. Monday-Wednesday & Friday-Saturday, 11am-4pm; Thursday, 11am-7pm. Free. (843)953-4422, halsey.cofc.edu*

"GEORGE READ: CLASSICAL INFORMALISM"

/// THROUGH DECEMBER 13

The George Gallery presents this showcase of

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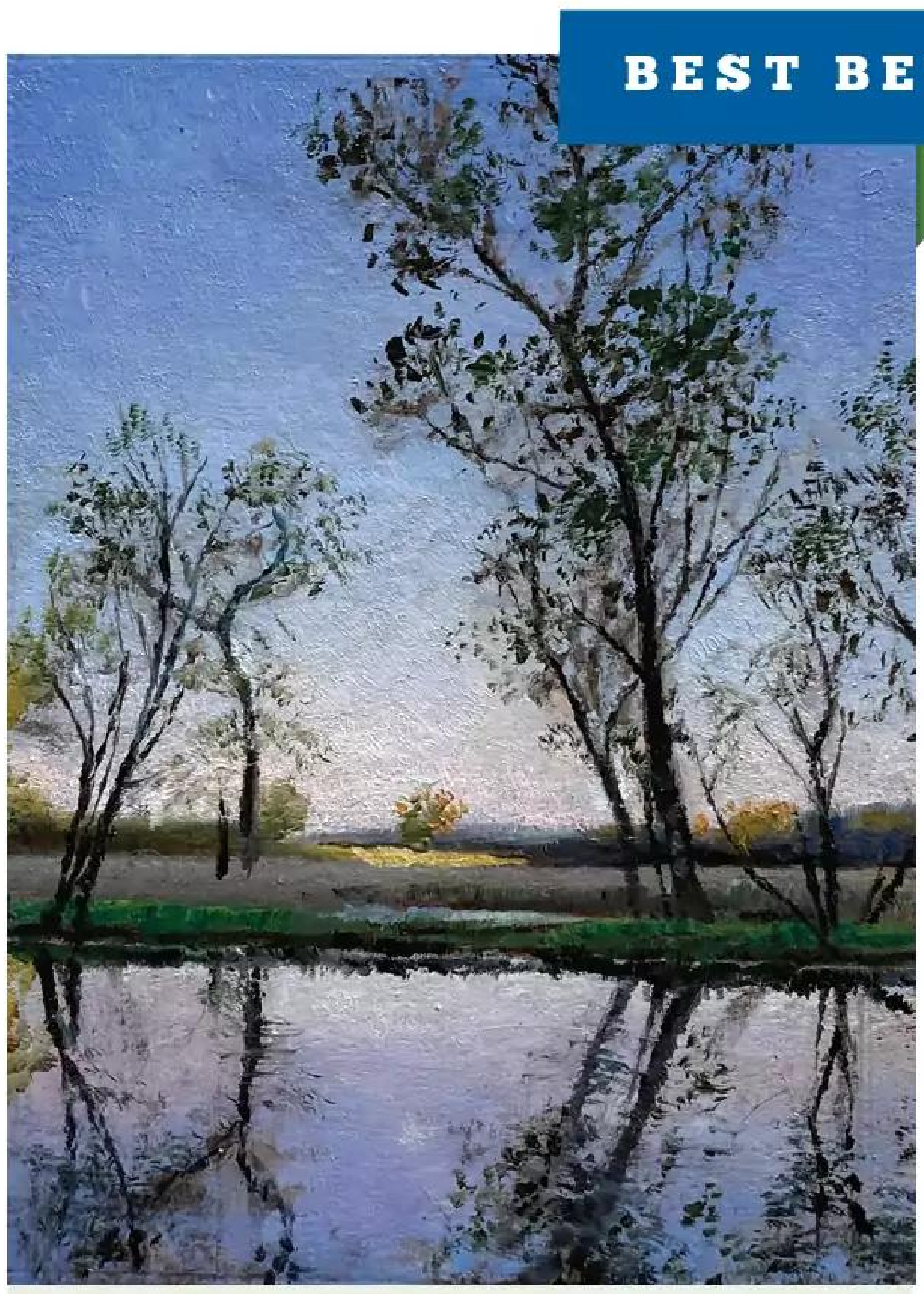

"MINIFAIR"

/// DECEMBER 5-19

From Robert Lange Studios comes this group exhibit featuring playful, small-scale works made by resident artists, including Marina Dieul, Kerry Simmons (whose work is pictured), and Megan Aline. Small model figures will "view" the art in the "mini museum," adding to the whimsical and immersive gallery experience. An opening reception will be held on December 5 from 5 to 8 p.m. *Robert Lange Studios, 2 Queen St. Daily, 11am-5pm. Free. (843)805-8052, robertlangestudios.com*

IMAGES COURTESY OF THE WINDMILL BY REMBRANDT VAN RIJN (ETCHING, 1641) THE GIBBES MUSEUM OF ART & FOX RIVER VALLEY, DUSK BY KERRY SIMMONS (OIL, 3.5 X 2.5 INCHES, 2025) ROBERT LANGE STUDIOS

CHARLESTON'S NEW HOLIDAY TRADITION RETURNS!

A CHRISTMAS STORY

DEC. 5 - 23
QUEEN STREET PLAYHOUSE
20 QUEEN ST.

the footlight players

SOUTH CAROLINA STINGRAYS HOCKEY

DECEMBER PROMO SCHEDULE

GET TICKETS HERE!

SAT. DEC. 6 | 6:05PM: TEDDY BEAR TOSS
PRESENTED BY CREWS CHEVROLET

SUN. DEC. 7 | 3:05PM: UGLY SWEATER NIGHT

WED. DEC. 10 | 7:05PM: DISABILITY AWARENESS
PRESENTED BY COASTAL KIDS

FRI. DEC. 12 | 7:05PM: SING FOR SANTA

SUN. DEC. 14 | 3:05PM: SPONGEBOB™ NIGHT + UNDIE SUNDAY
PRESENTED BY GILDAN

SAT. DEC. 20 | 6:05PM: WINTER WHITE OUT

SUN. DEC. 21 | 3:05PM: BLUEY DAY™

SAT. DEC. 27 | 6:05PM: ROCK THE RETRO
PRESENTED BY IBEW LOCAL 1776

works from prolific Charleston painter George Read. For this exhibition, the artist examines the principles of contemporary abstract art and its relationship to classical works using a limited color palette. *The George Gallery, 54 Broad St. Tuesday-Saturday, 11am-5pm.Free. (843)579-7328, georgegalleryart.com*

"REIMAGINED FASHION: CREATIONS OF THE FUTURE PAST" /// THROUGH JANUARY 18

Experience a blend of historic artistry and modern creativity in the Textile Gallery of the Charleston Museum. Guided by fashion stylist Andrea Serrano, local designers were tasked with drawing inspiration from the museum's collection to create reimagined garments. *The Charleston Museum, 360 Meeting St. Monday-Saturday, 9am-5pm; Sunday, noon-5pm. $30-$15. (843)722-2996, charlestonmuseum.org*

HOLIDAY LINOLEUM BLOCK PRINTING /// DECEMBER 1

Learn the art of block printing while creating personalized holiday cards during this hands-on workshop instructed by artist Taylor Faulkner. Participants will design, carve, and print their own image using soft-cut linoleum, with all materials provided. *Redux Contemporary Art Center, 1056 King St. Monday 6-9pm. $65. (843)722-0697, reduxstudios.org*

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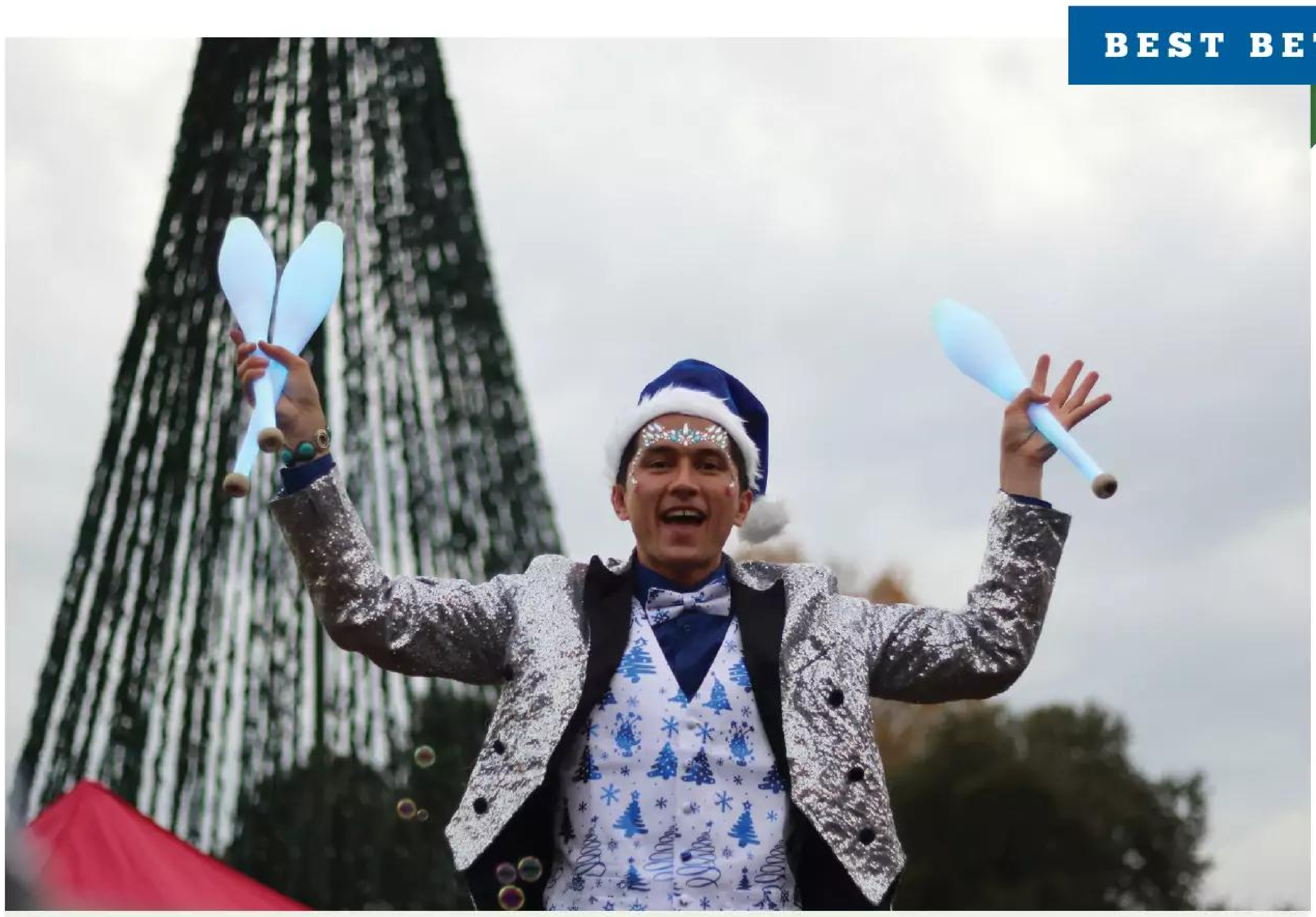

CHANUKAH IN THE SQUARE /// DECEMBER 14

Gather for the largest annual Jewish event in the state to enjoy a family-friendly evening of live entertainment and fun. Attendees can sample a variety of traditional foods ranging from latkes to matzo, dance to live music, and witness the traditional lighting of the menorah candles. *Marion Square, 329 Meeting St. Sunday, 4-6pm. Free. (843)884-2323, jewishchs.org*

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WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP /// DECEMBER 11

Join instructor Casey Price of Jeremiah Farm and Goat Dairy as she guides attendees through the process of creating elegant seasonal wreaths at Middleton Place. Intended for all experience levels, this workshop includes wine and charcuterie, with all materials provided. *Middletown Place, 4300 Ashley River Rd. Thursday, 6-8pm. $70-$65. (843)556-6020, middletonplace.org*

FOR THE LOVE OF LIBRARIES & POSTCARDS /// DECEMBER 2

Join Jerry Mitchell, former trustee and board chair of the Charleston Library Society, to view his extensive personal collection of illustrated postcards, which highlight the diverse forms of historical library architecture. *Charleston Library Society, 164 King St. Tuesday, 6-7pm. $15-$10. (843)723-9912, charlestonlibrarysociety.org*

SUSTAINABLE GIFT WRAPPING WORKSHOP /// DECEMBER 3 & 6

Hosted by the Redux Contemporary Art Center and artist Mariah Bintliff, this seasonal workshop centers around the Korean folk art of bojagi, a type of patchwork cloths made from scraps of cotton, silk, and hemp. The session begins with a soothing tea time, followed by a lesson on the gift-wrapping technique that has been used since the 14th century. *Redux Contemporary Art Center, 1056 King St. Wednesday 5-6:30pm & Saturday 10-11:30am. $45. (843)722-0697, reduxstudio.org*

HOLIDAY SHOPPING IN THE STACKS /// DECEMBER 4 & 5

Charleston Library Society opens its doors to the public for its annual market pop-up in the Main Reading Room. Browse a selection of teas, toffees, cookie baking kits, vintage books, and more from local makers, bakers, collectors, and artists. *Charleston Library Society, 164 King St. Thursday, 2-7pm & Friday, 10am-3pm. Free. (843)723-9912, charlestonlibrarysociety.org*

CHRISTMAS AT DRAYTON HALL /// DECEMBER 5-7, 12-14, 19, & 20

Join Drayton Hall curator of education Amber Satterthwaite on a tour of the historic home to learn how generations of residents celebrated the holidays. *Drayton Hall, 3380 Ashley River Rd. Days vary, 1-2pm. $45-$40. (843)769-2600, draytonhall.org*

ILLUMINATION CHARLESTON /// DECEMBER 5 & 6

Experts from across the Southeast lead historical house tours, design lectures, decor workshops, and more during this celebration of Southern excellence across a variety of fields. The lineup also includes book signings with notable Southern cookbook authors, including celebrity chef Carla Hall, as well as Saturday's Holiday Village at the Charleston Visitor Center featuring seminars by *Southern Living* editors and cooking

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF (JUGGLER) THE CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE & (WREATH) MIDDLETON PLACE

demos with renowned chefs. *The Charleston Visitors Center, 375 Meeting St. Friday & Saturday, times vary. $250-$20. (800)868-8118, southernlivingilluminationcharleston.com*

"LOCAL"

/// DECEMBER 5-23

Meyer Vogl Gallery presents a group exhibition dedicated to seven Charleston-based artists—including Laurie Meyer, Susan Altman, and Anne Darby Parker—who have contributed to the galleries. *Meyer Vogl Gallery, 122 Meeting St. Monday-Saturday, 10am-5pm; Sunday, noon-4pm. Free. (843)805-7144, meyervogl.com*

SWEETGRASS BASKET WEAVING WORKSHOP

/// DECEMBER 6

Learn the cultural history of sweetgrass basket weaving and the Gullah Geechee people from local artisan Jennifaye of Geechee Gyal Baskets. Refreshments and materials will be provided to participants, who will create their own personalized baskets during this session hosted in the Carriage House. *Magnolia Plantation & Gardens, 3550 Ashley River Rd. Sunday, 11am & 2pm. $100. (843)571-1266, magnoliaplantation.com*

BAYBERRY CANDLE DIPPING

/// DECEMBER 26-30

Celebrate the season at historic Middleton Place by hand-dipping bayberry candles, once believed to bring wealth and prosperity in the New Year. In this drop-in style workshop, guests can create their own candles to take home as a piece of history and holiday cheer. *Middleton Place, 4300 Ashley River Rd. Thursday-Tuesday, 1-3pm. $32-$10. (843)556-6020, middletonplace.org*

family

STORY STROLL

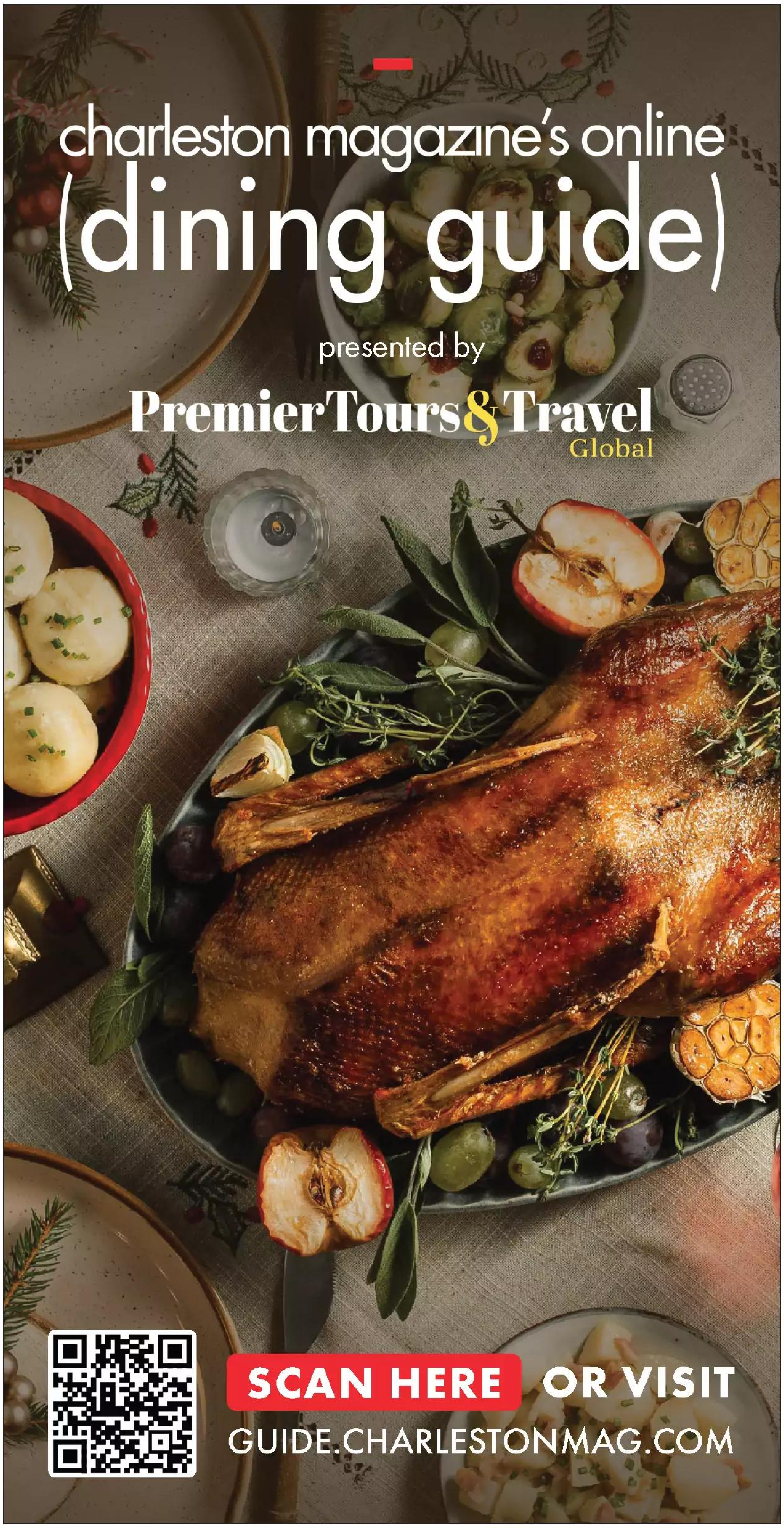
/// DECEMBER 3

Head to Magnolia Plantation and Gardens for a story session led by team members from the educational, horticulture, and ecology departments. Children can enjoy entertaining tales, learn more about the estate's history, and visit the wildlife center. *Magnolia Plantation & Gardens, 3550 Ashley River Rd. Wednesday, 10am-11am. $35-$21. (843)571-1266, magnoliaplantation.com*

A SEUSSIFIED CHRISTMAS CAROL

/// DECEMBER 5-21

Enjoy a playful reinvention of the classic story by Charles Dickens during this production from the Flowertown Players. This twist on a classic story can be appreciated by viewers of all ages. *The*



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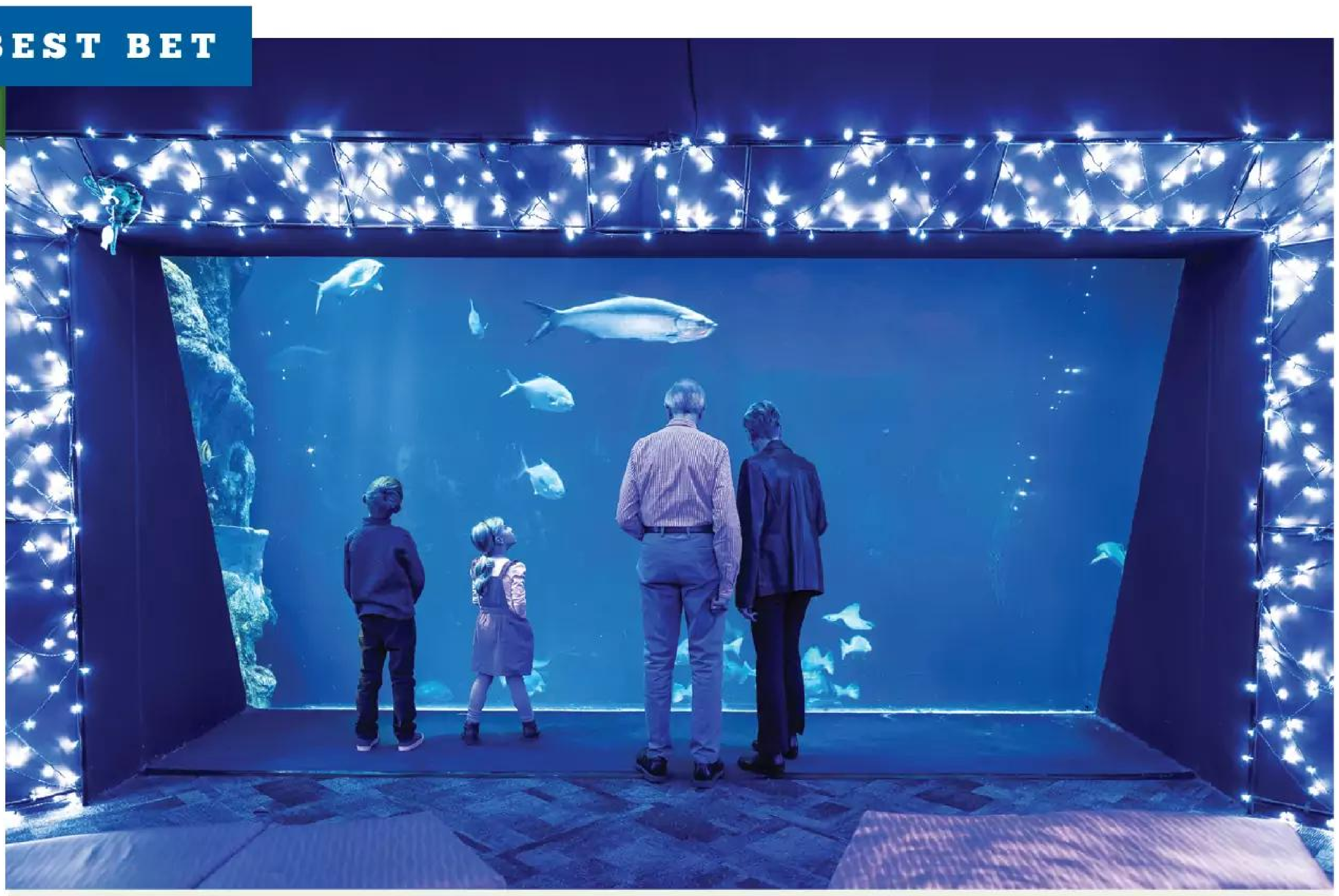


PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SOUTH CAROLINA AQUARIUM

AQUARIUM AGLOW

/// DECEMBER 1-30

The South Carolina Aquarium's immersive holiday experience returns, featuring thousands of LED lights, illuminated glass-blown sculptures, and appearances from a wetsuit-wearing "Scuba Claus." A rotation of musicians will play live music against a backdrop of marine life in the lower Great Ocean Tank Gallery. *South Carolina Aquarium, 100 Aquarium Wharf. Days vary, 5:30-9pm. $30-$22. (843)577-3474, scaquarium.org*

Flowertown Players, 133 S. Main St., Summerville. Days & times vary. $30-$14. (843)875-9251, flowertownplayers.org

CAT KID COMIC CLUB: THE MUSICAL!

/// DECEMBER 5

A musical adaptation of author Dav Pilkey's *Dog Man* series, this theatrical production follows Cat Kid as he attempts to teach a group of rambunctious baby frogs how to be creative. Intended for kids in first through fifth grade, the show features a colorful cast of puppets and human actors. *The Riviera, 227 King St. Friday, 6:30pm. $35-$18. (843)724-5212, gaillardcenter.org*

SC STINGRAYS HOME GAMES

/// DECEMBER 6-7, 10, 12, 14, 20-21, & 27

Embrace the cold with the Stingrays as they continue the hockey season, playing against the Greenville Swamp Rabbits, Orlando Solar Bears, and Savannah Ghost Pirates. *North Charleston Coliseum, 5001 Coliseum Dr. Days & times vary. $50-$38. stingrayshockey.com*

THE CHARLESTON SANTA

/// DECEMBER 6-7, 13-14, & 20-21

The Best Friend of Charleston Museum, home to America's first passenger steam locomotive, celebrates the holidays by inviting families to take photos with Santa Claus. The museum will be accepting new unwrapped toys to "fill the train" with gifts for children through Toys for Tots. *The Best Friend Train Museum, 23 Ann St. Saturday & Sunday, 10am-4pm. Free, reservations required. thecharlestonsanta.com*

DR. SEUSS' HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS! THE MUSICAL

/// DECEMBER 9-14

Experience the classic Christmas tale on the main stage, featuring iconic songs such as "You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch." Watch as the Grinch's heart grows two sizes as he discovers the true meaning of the holiday. *North Charleston Performing Arts Center, 5001 Coliseum Dr. Tuesday-Sunday, 7:30pm. $260-83. (843)529-5000, northcharlestoncoliseumpac.com*

HOLY CITY HOLIDAY MARKET

/// DECEMBER 19-21

This festive pop-up market features more than 200 vendors and makers. Spend the day exploring Old Park Circle, then grab grub from Barnyard Chicken, Daddy's Girls Bakery, and the taproom at Holy City Brewing. The festivities kick off on Friday with preview parties on the lawns at Holy City Brewing and Firefly Distillery, with an additional brunch event on Sunday at the same venues. *Old Park Circle. Friday, 5-9pm; Saturday, 11am-5pm; Sunday, 11am-2pm. Free. holycityholidaymarket.com*

KID TOURS: ARCTIC ANIMALS

/// DECEMBER 23

Hosted by The Charleston Museum, this educational session invites children to learn about creatures that live in freezing climates, such as polar bears and walruses. After a tour of the galleries, attendees can create a themed craft. *The Charleston Museum, 360 Meeting St. Thursday, 3-4pm. $12-$6. (843)722-2996, charlestonmuseum.org*

TEEN WORKSHOP: WAR PHOTOGRAPHY

/// DECEMBER 23

This STEAM-oriented program at The Charleston Museum teaches teens the important legacy of war-time photography. Participants can learn more about the history of this field, how the development of camera technology has impacted the profession, and to analyze photographs from various wars. *The Charleston Museum, 360 Meeting St. Wednesday, 1-2:30pm. $10-$5. (843)722-2996, charlestonmuseum.org*

outdoors

HOLIDAY SLEIGH RIDE

/// DECEMBER 1-31

This half-hour, horse-drawn carriage ride through downtown includes caroling and Christmas lights viewing. The tour concludes at Santa's stable with cookies, hot cocoa, and a visit with Mr. and Mrs. Claus. *Old South Carriage Company, 14 Anson St. Thursday-Monday, 4-9pm. $35. (843)7239-712, oldsouthcarriage.com*

NIGHTS OF A THOUSAND CANDLES

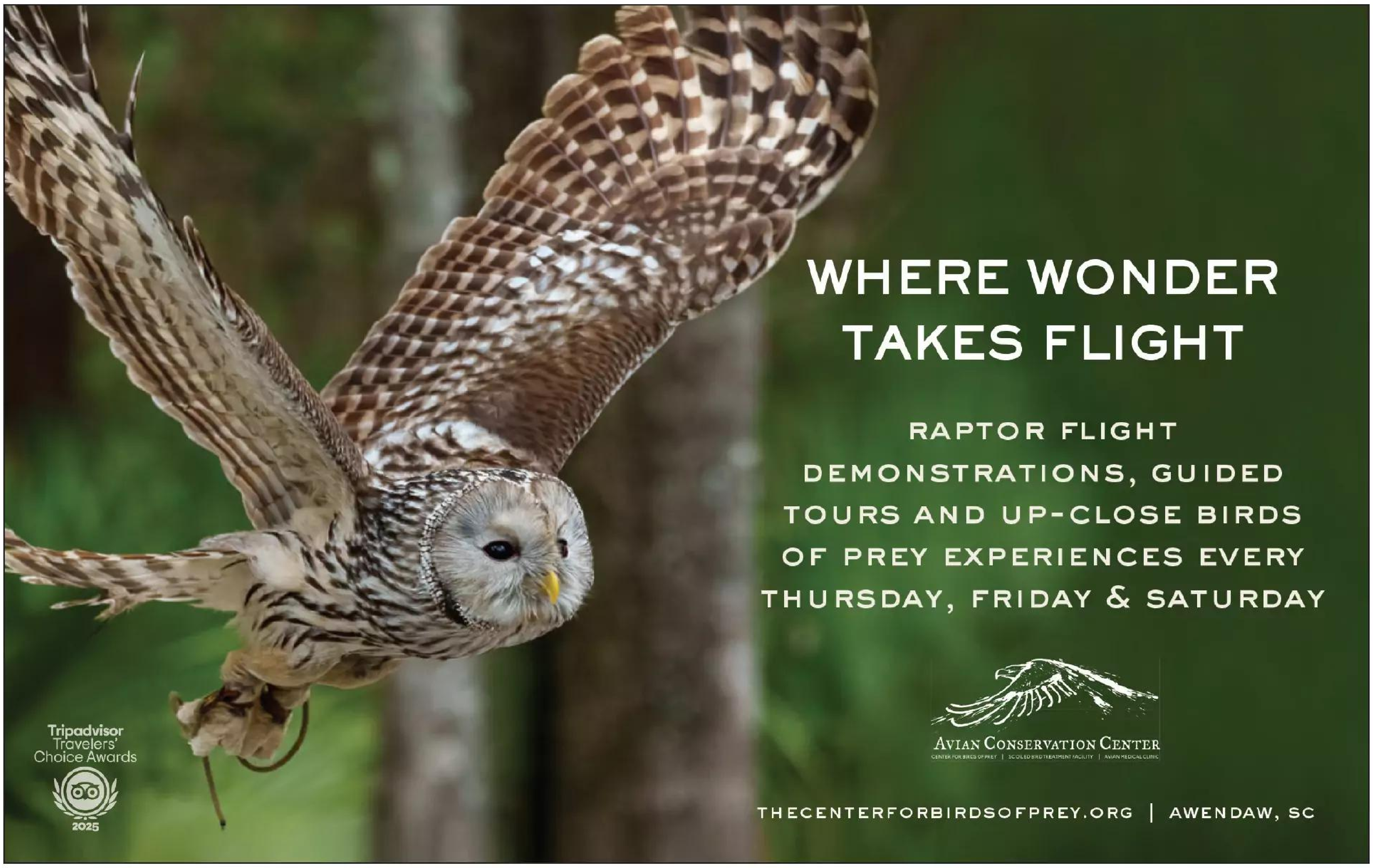
/// DECEMBER 1, 5-8, 12-15, 19-22, & 31

Brookgreen Gardens continues its beloved holiday tradition of illuminating the grounds with thousands of twinkling lights and hand-lit candles. Enjoy small bites from the Old Kitchen and a cup of hot chocolate, cider, or wine while carolers and rotating bands provide entertainment throughout the garden. *Brookgreen Gardens, 1931 Brookgreen Dr., Murrells Inlet. Tuesday-Sunday, 4-9pm. $35-$14. (843)235-6000, brookgreen.org*

OWLS BY MOONLIGHT

/// DECEMBER 5

Experience flight demonstrations under the night sky in the Center for Birds of Prey's Countess Paolozzi Owl Wood. Guests will receive complimentary cocktails and hors d'oeuvres and meet staff of the Avian Medical Clinic to learn more about the treatment of wild injured owls. *The Center for Birds of Prey, 4719 Hwy. 17 N., Awendaw. Thursday, 6-9pm. $125. (843)971-7474, thecenterforbirdsofprey.org*



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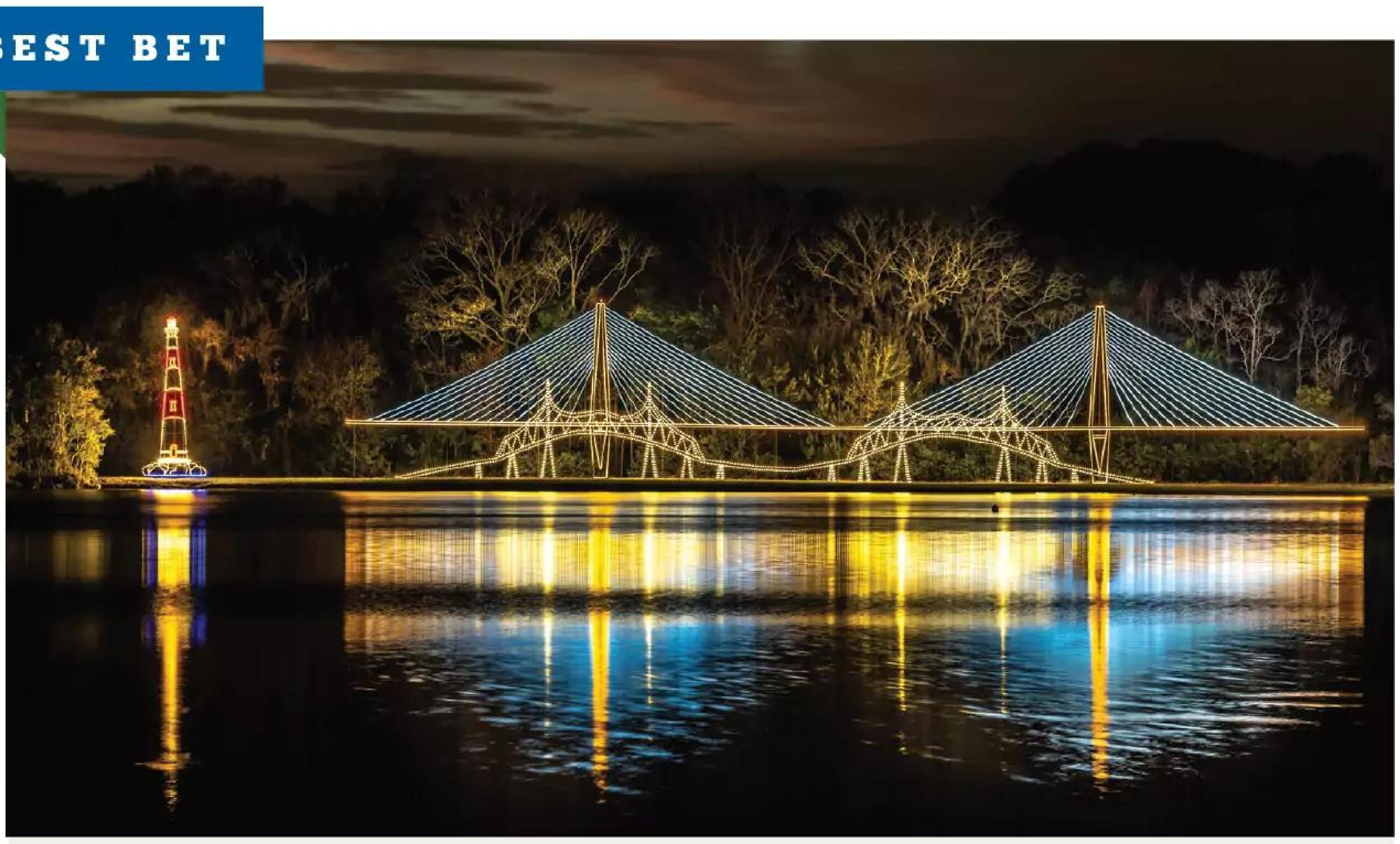

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CHARLESTON COUNTY PARKS

HOLIDAY FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

/// DECEMBER 1-31

More than two million bulbs light up James Island County Park during its annual Holiday Festival of Lights. Enjoy nearly 750 displays from the car or explore the park on foot along the Enchanted Walking Trail. Activities include a holiday train ride, Santa's Village, a carousel, and more. Those with a sweet tooth can roast marshmallows or stop at Santa's Sweet Shoppe for kettle corn, hot chocolate, and other holiday treats. *James Island County Park, 871 Riverland Dr. Daily, 5:30-10pm. $30-$15. (843)406-6990, ccprc.com*

KIAWAH MARATHON

/// DECEMBER 13

Join 3,000 runners for the 47th Kiawah Island Golf Resort Marathon that starts and finishes at the West Beach Concert Center. Whether they choose the 13.1-mile or 26.2-mile course, participants can enjoy the sights of waterways, lush forests, and grand homes of the Kiawah community. *West Beach Conference Center, 2 Shipwatch Rd., Kiawah Island. Saturday, 8am. $130-$120. (843)768-6001, kiawahresort.com*

FOLLY BEACH FLIP-FLOP DROP

/// DECEMBER 31

Ring in 2025 with Folly Beach's take on the Times Square ball drop, featuring a giant pair of sparkly flip-flops. Grab a spot on the sand to watch fireworks go off as the clock hits midnight, then hit nearby restaurants for after-hours food and drink specials. *Center St., Folly Beach. Saturday, 9:30pm-12:30am. Free. visitfolly.com*

charitable events

GATHER & GIVE

/// DECEMBER 7

Postpartum Support Charleston celebrates its 25th anniversary of community service with an oyster roast. Since its founding in 2000, the local nonprofit has supported more than 4,000 mothers struggling with maternal mental illnesses, such as postpartum depression and anxiety. *Alhambra Hall, 131 Middle St., Mount Pleasant. Sunday, 4-6pm. $150-$25. (843)410-3585, postpartumsupportchs.org*

WINE UNDER THE OAKS

/// DECEMBER 7

Wine and dine under the oak trees during this fundraiser at Boone Hall Plantation benefitting local organizations. Pair your glass of red or white with a spread of oysters, decadent desserts, and other bites while vibing to The Midnight City Band and watching culinary demonstrations. *Boone Hall Plantation & Gardens, 1235 Long Point Rd., Mount Pleasant. Sunday, 1-5pm. $80. (843)884-4371, boonehallplantation.com*

REINDEER RUN

/// DECEMBER 13

Sponsored by The Charleston Place and Half-Moon Outfitters, this 33rd-annual run takes participants and pooches on a 5K course along the Battery. Dress in festive attire and costumes for the opportunity to win gift cards to local restaurants and other prizes during a post-race celebration in the Market Street Circle. Proceeds provide support for families with patients being treated at MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital. *141 Meeting St., Saturday, 8-10am. $35-$10. reindeerrun.org*

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SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE

1 BOSSIS DRIVE

west ashley

This beautifully renovated ranch in West Oak Forest blends timeless charm with modern updates, just minutes from downtown Charleston. Highlights include original hardwood floors, a chef's kitchen with quartzite countertops and banquette seating, a stunning den with vaulted ceilings, and a custom wood-burning fireplace. The primary suite features a sleek modern bath, while a flexible third bedroom includes built-ins and a hidden Murphy bed. Enjoy a fully fenced backyard with a patio, one-car garage, and gated boat storage—perfect for Lowcountry living. ***2,199 square feet, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths; $699,000***

Contact: *Mary Lou Wertz*

Phone Number: *(843) 822-2500*

Website: *www.maisonchs.com*

MAISON REAL ESTATE

194 FISHBURNE STREET

downtown

Live in style in this beautifully designed contemporary home in Charleston's sought-after Westside neighborhood. Featuring an open-concept layout with wide-plank hardwood floors, a showstopping kitchen, and a private screened-in porch with Trex decking, every detail is crafted for comfort and elegance. The light-filled interior includes a serene primary suite, custom work-from-home space, and two off-street parking spots. Walk to Hampton Park, local cafés, and all the charm downtown Charleston has to offer. ***1,562 square feet, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths; $1,055,000***

Contact: *Mary Lou Wertz*

Phone Number: *(843) 822-2500*

Website: *www.maisonchs.com*

MAISON REAL ESTATE

769 BULLS BAY BOULEVARD

awendaw

Gain immediate access to the Bulls Bay Golf Club with purchase; one of the South's most exclusive private golf enclaves. ***5,182 square feet, 5 bedrooms, 4.5 baths; $2,900,000***

Contact: *Bryan Crabtree*

Phone: *(843) 343-4141*

Website: *bryancrabtreerealestate.com*

CHRISTIE'S INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

75 AIKEN STREET, 200

downtown

Modern living meets downtown convenience in this upgraded Charleston gem on the vibrant Eastside. With two spacious en-suite bedrooms, a sun-filled open floor plan, and a rare oversized side yard, this home is perfect for entertaining or relaxing. Enjoy stunning views from the rooftop deck, plus a screened porch, garage, and parking for up to four cars. Thoughtful upgrades throughout make this move-in-ready home a standout in one of the city's fastest-growing neighborhoods. ***1,240 square feet, 2 bedrooms, 2.5 baths; $775,000***

Contact: *Leslie Turner*

Phone Number: *(843) 362-3722*

Website: *www.maisonchs.com*

MAISON REAL ESTATE

2531 HELMSMAN ROAD

kiawah river

Live the Lowcountry dream in this light-filled home in the heart of Kiawah River. Thoughtfully designed with soaring ceilings, a chef's kitchen, spacious living areas, and a screened-in porch, it's perfect for both relaxing and entertaining. Enjoy easy access to trails, waterfront adventures, farm stands, and resort-style amenities—plus a roomy garage for all your gear. ***2,830 square feet, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths; $1,399,000***

Contact: *Mary Lou Wertz*

Phone Number: *(843) 822-2500*

Website: *www.maisonchs.com*

MAISON REAL ESTATE

417 CORLEY STREET

palmetto bluff, bluffton

Known as "The Marsh View House," this Palmetto Bluff retreat is a haven offering exquisite indoor-outdoor living and a strong short-term rental history. Offering sweeping marsh views of the May River, its tri-level design centers on connection and comfort, with a game room opening to a pool, spa, and firepit, and a main living level blending a coffered-ceiling great room, custom kitchen, and expansive screened porch with an outdoor kitchen. It offers a secluded sanctuary perfectly in tune with its natural surroundings. ***4,834 square feet, 5 bedrooms, 6 full baths, 1 half bath; $5,290,000***

Contact: *Bryan Byrne*

Phone Number: *(843) 247-3374*

Website: *www.palmettobluff.com*

PALMETTO BLUFF REAL ESTATE COMPANY

charleston estate marketplace

SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE

1182 WELCOME DRIVE

➔ mount pleasant

This custom-built home in Snee Farm Village offers refined Lowcountry living overlooking lush fairways. Enjoy wide porches, an airy open floor plan with a fireside family room, a chef's kitchen with Thermador appliances, a dedicated office, and an impressive primary suite. ***2,700 square feet, 3 bedrooms, 2 full baths, 2 half baths; $1,395,000***

Contact: *Meghan Webster*

Phone Number: *(843) 813-2311*

Website: *www.danielravenelsir.com*

Daniel Ravenel
Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

610 PALMETTO STREET

➔ mount pleasant

Beautifully renovated ranch with a dedicated home office in the Old Mount Pleasant neighborhood. Open layout, new hardwood floors, bright kitchen with modern finishes, and renovated bathrooms. New roof, water heater, and HVAC system offer comfort and peace of mind. Charming backyard with screened porch, lush garden, brick fireplace, and gazebo. ***1,603 square feet, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths; $1,449,000***

Contact: *Ginn Maiers*

Phone Number: *(843) 696-7402*

Website: *www.dunesproperties.com*

dunes properties

507 WEST ASHLEY AVENUE

➔ folly beach

This exceptional oceanfront property offers a superb location, breathtaking views, and unparalleled design. Discover the epitome of luxury living and make this dream home your reality. ***3,791 square feet, 6 bedrooms, 5 baths; $4,750,000***

Contact: *Laurie Hull*

Phone Number: *(843) 209-4576*

Website: *www.dunesproperties.com*

dunes properties

2518 GRACE CHAPEL ROAD

➔ wadmalaw island

Set along a quiet road behind the historic Grace Chapel in the village of Rockville, this circa-1922 cottage blends timeless character and Lowcountry serenity. Featuring stained-glass windows, heart-pine floors, a generous eat-in kitchen, a spacious screened porch, and dramatic river views framed by live oaks. ***3,077 square feet, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths; $1,500,000***

Contact: *Curry Smoak*

Phone Number: *(843) 729-5691*

Website: *www.danielravenelsir.com*

Daniel Ravenel
Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

1409 TANNERY ROW

➔ johns island

Built in 2017, this home offers modern living at its finest, designed for everyday comfort and entertaining. Open concept main floor with a spacious kitchen. Primary suite and guest rooms are on the second floor. Conveniently located near shopping and dining, a short drive to downtown Charleston and the beaches. ***1,712 square feet, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths; $479,000***

Contact: *Jesse Slowikowski*

Phone Number: *(843) 901-6439*

Website: *www.dunesproperties.com*

dunes properties

1563 CAPEL STREET

➔ mount pleasant

The epitome of elegance and craftsmanship in the heart of Park West's Masonborough section. This remarkable former model home boasts an array of custom features including upgraded trim and tile and a custom bar in the sitting room. The showstopper of a gourmet kitchen creates the perfect gathering space. ***3,692 square feet, 5 bedrooms, 3.5 baths, $1,355,000***

Contact: *Beth Huntley Jennifer O'Brian*

Phone Number: *(843) 437-8668 (610) 283-0867*

Website: *www.dunesproperties.com*

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SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE

8083 POINT OF PINES ROAD

edisto island

Multiple property parcel. Historic home with dock and centuries-old live oaks. The three-story house features two-story porches facing the creek, one full porch on front, gorgeous beautiful heart pine floors, high ceilings with exposed beams, and ambiance galore. Listing also includes two-story retail space, currently in use as a beauty salon, and former Old Post Office, which once operated as a successful restaurant. ***$1,850,000***

Contact: *Jim Kempson*
Phone Number: *(843) 509-6890*
Website: *www.seaislandrealty.com, www.jimkempson.com*
Email: *jkempson1@gmail.com*

Carolina One
Real Estate

171 MARY ELLEN DRIVE

wagener terrace

This timeless Southern home offers three porches, bright open rooms, high ceilings, and gleaming hardwood floors. Nestled in Longborough within Charleston's Wagener Terrace, it blends charm and convenience—minutes from downtown amid tree-lined streets, diverse architecture, lush landscaping, and a peaceful community waterfront park. ***3,130 square feet, 3 bedrooms, 3.5 baths; $1,950,000***

Text LLP to 59559 for info and photos.

Contact: *Lois Lane*
Phone Number: *(843) 270-2797*
Website: *www.loislaneproperties.com*

LOIS LANE
PROPERTIES

29 1/2 STATE STREET, B

french quarter

Embrace classic Charleston charm in this renovated 1800s flat, featuring original floors, exposed brick, and abundant natural light. Modern comforts include a chef's kitchen, spacious living area, and private bedroom. Relax on the balcony with the sounds of St. Philip's bells—all steps from downtown's best dining, art, and history. ***988 square feet, 1 bedroom, 1 bath; $919,000***

Text LLP to 59559 for info and photos.

Contact: *Belinda Hodgson*
Phone Number: *(508) 237-3608*
Website: *www.loislaneproperties.com*

LOIS LANE
PROPERTIES

#220 BAY CREEK VILLA

edisto island

Second-floor creekside Bay Creek villa. Remodeled and upgraded with gourmet kitchen cabinets, hardwood floors, new tile bath with walk-in shower, custom window treatments, and wind-rated windows and sliding glass doors. Offered fully furnished. Enjoy views of the marina and ammenity access. ***$528,000***

Contact: *Jim Kempson*
Phone Number: *(843) 509-6890*
Website: *www.seaislandrealty.com, www.jimkempson.com*
Email: *jkempson1@gmail.com*

Carolina One
Real Estate

150 BEE STREET, 308

bee street lofts

This modern loft-style condo features soaring ceilings, polished concrete floors, and sleek finishes. Residents enjoy access to premium amenities including a fitness center, dog park, secure parking, and landscaped courtyard with Ashley River views. Walkable to MUSC and WestEdge, it offers effortless luxury and convenience in the heart of Charleston. ***964 square feet, 1 bedroom, 1.5 baths; $459,000***

Text LLP to 59559 for info and photos.

Contact: *Lois Lane*
Phone Number: *(843) 270-2797*
Website: *www.loislaneproperties.com*

LOIS LANE
PROPERTIES

675 WEDGEWOOD DRIVE

murrells inlet

In the Mt. Gilead neighborhood of Murrells Inlet, this exquisite home offers a blend of Southern charm and elegance. The residence is perfectly positioned on a direct marshfront lot, providing water views and unparalleled access to nature. A private pier and boat dock invite endless opportunities for boating, fishing, kayaking, and enjoying the tranquil setting. ***4,000 square feet, 5 bedrooms, 3.5 baths; $1,397,000***

Contact: *Traci Miles*
Phone Number: *(843) 997-8891*
Website: *www.tracimiles.com*

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charleston magazine

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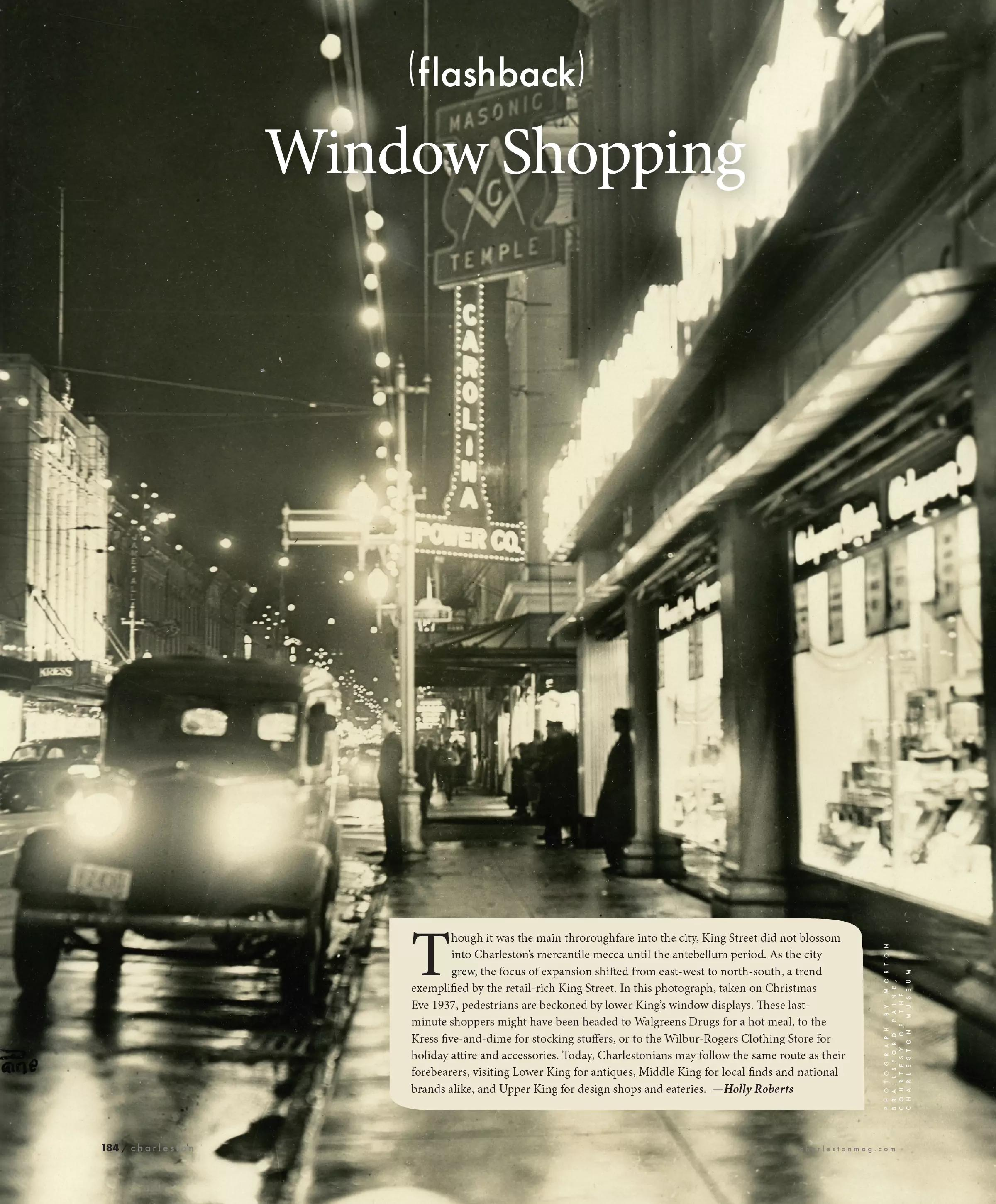
(flashback)

Window Shopping



Though it was the main throroughfare into the city, King Street did not blossom into Charleston's mercantile mecca until the antebellum period. As the city grew, the focus of expansion shifted from east-west to north-south, a trend exemplified by the retail-rich King Street. In this photograph, taken on Christmas Eve 1937, pedestrians are beckoned by lower King's window displays. These last-minute shoppers might have been headed to Walgreens Drugs for a hot meal, to the Kress five-and-dime for stocking stuffers, or to the Wilbur-Rogers Clothing Store for holiday attire and accessories. Today, Charlestonians may follow the same route as their forebearers, visiting Lower King for antiques, Middle King for local finds and national brands alike, and Upper King for design shops and eateries. —***Holly Roberts***

PHOTOGRAPH BY MORTON BRAILSFORD PAINE, COURTESY OF THE CHARLESTON MUSEUM

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